A Critical Analysis of Manuel Castells' Urban Political Theory

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation traces out, critically evaluates and extends Castells' theory of urban politics. In doing so, I focus on a significant shift in the development of his work which I argue is best conceptualized as a movement from an Althusserian structuralist problematic to a "social and political hermeneutics" of the urban. This transformation is present in the philosophical, meta-substantive and concrete arguments which he puts forward, and I concentrate on each of these aspects respectively. The shift in his approach is exemplified by his two major texts on urban politics: The Urban Question and The City and the Grassroots, both of which I examine in depth in this dissertation. I explain and contextualize his work by sketching out the intellectual and historical context against which these writings may be understood. I claim that the changes in Castells' work parallel shifts in other intellectual tendencies, seen most notably in debates about modernity and post-modernity, Marxism and post-Marxism. Castells' analyses also confirm and add to recent debates about the nature of contemporary capitalism and the role and significance of the "new social movements".

In general, I endorse the movement in Castells' approach to urban political theory from an objective and scientific conception of urban politics to a perspective which stresses the political and historical construction of urban meaning. Thus I concede his later paradigm a priority in my efforts to deepen and explicate his theses. In doing so, I outline a "radical materialist" ontology, derived from my reading of Derrida's deconstruction of Western metaphysics, which serves as the basis for the methodological, substantive and concrete claims I put forward. The structure of this dissertation reflects these various themes and arguments. Part One presents a genealogy of Castells' writings on urban politics and traces out the emergence of his different problematizations of urban politics. Part Two provides a detailed critique of Castells' earlier paradigms. Part Three is concerned with a deconstructive reading of the later Castells, in which I endeavour to deepen and extend Castells' approach to urban political theory on the philosophical, meta-substantive and concrete levels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A Deconstructive Reading of the Later Castells

Introduction

The primary aim of this dissertation is to provide a critical reading of Manuel Castells' urban political theory. Castells' work provides an important, one might even say essential, starting-point for an investigation of the numerous debates and discussions about the specificity of urban politics. The widespread interest in this field of analysis is in no small measure a product of Castells' early attempts to ground urban analysis on a firm scientific foundation.[1] Moreover, Castells' work has been evolving consistently to meet new challenges and historical changes in this field of investigation. From his earliest forays into urban theory until his most recent publications, Castells' work has remained at the leading edge of critical urban and political sociology. Both these factors make an analysis of his various interventions a useful point of access for theorising questions pertaining to the urban problematic. By conceding Castells' text a certain priority in the urban sociological tradition, I hope to be able to outline a research problematic which might be employed in more concrete analyses.

Castells' various interventions are located in a precise theoretical space. To be more specific, in the Marxist tradition of analysis. In each phase of his writings, Castells has situated his work in relation to this corpus of theory. At the outset it was shaped decisively by the Althusserian problematic and even in his most "revisionist" text, The City and the Grassroots, Castells stresses that "the glorious ruins of the Marxist tradition" is of prime importance in the development of his theory.[2] I emphasise Castells' relationship with Marxism against the background of the growing crisis in Marxist theory and practice, and in relation to the breakdown of the Althusserian project. Nowadays, it has become something of a cliche to speak of the "crisis of Marxism".[3] Nevertheless, the fact that this cliche is so ready to hand is indicative of the degree to which Marxism, and Left-wing thought more generally, has failed to adapt to recent historical and intellectual changes. This has been particularly evident in the analysis of political

phenomena.[4] The fact that Castells has such a close connection with Marxist discourse while, at the same time, attempting to go beyond its narrow and stultifying parameters, makes a reading of his work useful in assessing current debates about the merits of "post-Marxist" political theory and practice.[5] It also facilitates a reassessment of Althusserianism which has virtually disappeared in recent years.[6] My second aim in this reading of Castells' urban theory is thus to assess to what extent his work opens up new possibilities for reformulating Marxist and post-Marxist theories of politics.

Castells' work also sheds light on our understanding of contemporary phenomena such as the new social movements and what some have called "New Times".[7] Though his own research has tended to concentrate on the structuration of urban forms and the emergence of urban social movements, Castells places urban movements in the context of the new social forces which have emerged in Western Europe and elsewhere during the 1960s and 1970s.[8] In his attempt to explain and contextualize these new forms and processes, he has drawn on many ideas which have occupied present-day social and political theory. In the 1960s and early 1970s, during which he published his pathbreaking book The Urban Question, Castells articulated the new currents of Marxism and structuralism.[9] By contrast, his later analyses have drawn on those discourses which have attempted to weaken some of these strong claims made about social and political reality. In this way, his later writings adopt a more historically and contextually specific approach to social relations and processes. A third objective in this dissertation is to examine Castells' different readings of the new political forces and processes which have emerged in the various contexts which he has examined.

The delineation of these three themes shows something of the scope of Castells' work. Yet a reading of Castells is also useful because of the depth of his various analyses. By depth I mean the different dimensions which his work embraces. In each of his approaches to urban theory, he has stressed the organic unity between the philosophical and substantive aspects of his investigations. Furthermore, he has conducted detailed empirical research into the phenomena he has

theorised, and has been concerned with the methodological procedures underpinning his concrete research. To some extent, this reflects the fact that his work emanates from the Marxist tradition, a tradition which has consistently stressed the imbrication of philosophy, history and concrete analysis. While not accepting the totalizing imperatives of Marxism, this fact does give his work a complexity which shall be explored in this reading.

To unravel the themes condensed in my overall objectives, I will concentrate on three key aspects of his work. Firstly, I examine the way in which Castells produces the concepts with which he theorises the "urban question". This is primarily a philosophical question relating to the epistemological and methodological assumptions underpinning the different phases of his work. Here I am interested in the manner by which Castells critically reads the urban sociological tradition and how he subsequently attempts to construct alternative theoretical frameworks. Secondly, I am interested in the substantive propositions which Castells advances to understand urban phenomena. Here I am interested in the macro-theoretical categories which he outlines to make sense of more concrete and conjunctural phenomena. This concerns his theory of society and history, his conceptualization of the "urban", urban social change and the specificity of urban politics. Thirdly, I analyse the concrete conclusions which Castells puts forward in his various accounts of particular urban phenomena. For example, at this level of analysis, I am concerned with the alternative interpretations which he offers with regard to the emergence and character of urban social movements and their contemporary political significance. This aspect of Castells' work necessarily embraces the methodological dimension of his work for it concerns the way in which his more general categories are deployed in particular historical and social settings.

All of these problematizations and their interrelationships have been central to Castells' intellectual project. It is my aim to pursue these problems in relation to the different stages through which his work has moved. I shall begin by examining the approach outlined in The Urban Question. I will then discuss the work of the "transitional

phase", outlined most clearly in his collection of essays entitled City, Class and Power, where Castells began to reformulate his initial arguments.[10] Finally, I will consider the analyses presented in his later theorizations of urban politics which have been developed in The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City.[11]

My evaluation of Castells' urban political theory hinges on an important shift in his investigations. The publication of The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City in the 1980s represents a significant break with his earlier conceptualization of urban politics. In particular, this rupture centres on the rejection of Althusser's structuralist model of social relations. This movement away from Marxist structuralism parallels a number of contemporary theorizations of social, cultural and political phenomena, and is symptomatic of a broader dislocation in essentialist accounts of reality. In numerous intellectual spheres there is an increasing awareness of limits in relation to the project of modernity.[12] This awareness of limits is not restricted to critical intellectual discourses, but is also evident in discourses of emancipation and in notions of a universal political subjectivity which were to embody a just social order. The collapse of communism, for example, as a unified weltanschauung following the revolutionary upsurges of 1989 is a clear expression of the failure to ground emancipatory discourses on a rational and objective understanding of the social. What some have named the condition of "post-modernity" refers to the constraints which hamper our efforts to grasp social, cultural and political reality in an apodictic fashion.[13]

In this dissertation, I hope to show that this break with the transcendental is present in the work of Castells. Initially, his work was shaped by the dual imperatives of structuralism and Marxism, both of which, in their critical engagement with the project of modernity, fell victim and succumbed to its totalizing myths. Castells' later account of urban politics can be understood as part of the intellectual and social transformations which are weakening the all-encompassing claims of modernity. I shall also show that even though his work can be understood in relation to these shifts, there are still some residual traces of the

early conceptualization in his later theses.[14] This is evident in some of the substantive conclusions of his later work which I believe are unduly pessimistic about the prospects and extent of social change made possible by the new collective imaginaries of our time. This pessimism in relation to new social forces is a function of the residual essentialism which constitutes the basis of his earlier paradigm.

To sustain these theses, I conceptualize the shifts in Castells' intellectual development as a movement from an Althusserian Marxist perspective to a "political and social hermeneutics". That is, his work moves from an objective and scientific account of urban structures to a perspective which stresses the historical and political construction of urban meaning. This displacement will be used to read all the relevant stages and aspects in Castells' conception of urban politics. It will thus include the epistemological and methodological principles informing his theorization, the meta-theoretical assumptions which organise his explanation of substantive historical processes, as well as the more concrete arguments which he presents concerning the significance of urban social movements and their relation with the contemporary articulation of space, time and society.

Much of this dissertation is concerned with textual analysis. It concentrates on a number of texts from a variety of intellectual currents and traditions. These readings are unified by a common set of questions and problems arising out of my effort to interpret, criticise and develop Castells' arguments. While my approach is not unified by any particular method of analysis, there are a number of textual exemplars from which I have drawn. It is necessary to discuss some of these techniques before presenting the results of my investigations. This will not be an exhaustive discussion in that the usefulness and coherence of the approaches can only be demonstrated in their actual usage.

While my approach to Castells' writings falls broadly into the hermeneutical tradition, with its twin emphases on interpretation and understanding,[15] I would like to isolate two key textual and discursive techniques which have guided my reading. These are the various

methodological devices outlined by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Foucault's numerous investigations have all been concerned to some extent with the methodological dimension of his enterprise.[16] He has employed three main approaches in accounting for his numerous studies. Initially, he outlined the **archaeological** method of analysis for an understanding of discursive formations.[17] After widespread criticism of his archaeological method he turned to the more Nietzschean inspired **genealogical** approach.[18] His later works, in particular his writings on the history of sexuality, set out to articulate these two approaches around the notion of **problematizations**.[19]

All these procedures were directed at the analysis of discourse. The archaeological method was used to analyse "statements", as Foucault called them, without recourse to a transcendental subject.[20] Dreyfus and Rabinow argue that Foucault's "double phenomenological bracketing" resulted in a suspension of the reality of the object and the meaning-giving subject.[21] Instead, Foucault focused on the historical conditions of existence of the statement. The episteme served as a set of historical rules which made possible the existence of the archive and discursive statements. In this way, Foucault hoped to explain the emergence and transformation of bodies of discourse without being drawn into a hermeneutical discussion about their supposed meaning or truth. He was thus also able to dispense with a constitutive subject of knowledge. The break with a transcendental account of knowledge production failed, however, when it became clear that Foucault's own method of investigation simply repeated the transcendental approach he opposed.[22] The system of rules which formed the episteme were conceded an a priori and deterministic role in relation to the empirical and contingent bodies of discourse he was trying to account for.[23] For this reason Foucault was quickly regarded as simply "another structuralist".[24] Moreover, dispensing with the transcendental subject left the role and status of the "archaeologist" in dispute. How was Foucault to account for the archaeologist's own role in the production of discourse? Denying the archaeologist any say in the analysis of discursive formations seemed both impossible to achieve and politically and ethically paralysing.[25]

For these reasons, Foucault soon dispensed with the sophisticated set of intellectual tools he had outlined in the Archaeology of Knowledge, and which he had used in The Order of Things and in The Birth of the Clinic. Instead, he turned to the writings of Nietzsche for a more radically historical and engaged method of investigation. His essay, "Nietzsche, Genealogy and History" pointed in a new direction.[26] Instead of focussing on the synchronic dimension of discursive analysis, he now concentrated on the radical historicity and contingency of systems of discourse.[27] Instead of an existent system of discourse with a fixed and pre-given origin, Foucault's genealogies attempt to show the historical emergence of discourses. Moreover, as opposed to Hegel's teleological dialectics, Foucault stressed the contingent and political articulation of discourses.[28] The "event", with all its Heideggerian overtones, marks the possible emergence of a new configuration of truth and power, and is in stark contrast to the dialectics of a necessary progression in history.[29]

The genealogies of discursive configurations - the particular articulations of knowledge, discourse and power - are, according to Foucault, always critical and ethical interventions. The creation of genealogies shows the emergence and formation of discursive practices which had no internal necessity. The purpose of genealogical analysis is to show the constructed nature of practices which are always susceptible to change.[30] This is reinforced by Foucault's explicit commitment to a contemporary location of the problems he investigates. In Discipline and Punish, Foucault argues he is writing a "history of the present".[31] In other words, an account of the formation of strategies and power relations - disciplinary technologies, surveillance and so forth - which have surfaced in contemporary societies and become problematic and oppressive. The object of genealogy is to trace, in a non-dialectical fashion, the creation and legitimation of strategies which might appear to be wholly innocent and well intentioned. Thus Foucault recovers the hermeneutic and engaged motif which was lacking in his archaeological phase. Discursive formations are not meaningless objects of investigation which the archaeologist accounts for in a detached fashion. Rather, the genealogist sets out to uncover the genesis of

apparently normal and rational practices by showing the contingent and exclusionary nature of their beginnings. The arbitrary and perhaps oppressive nature of certain practices are thus problematized without recourse to essential and objective origins with predetermined historical trajectories.[32]

Foucault employed the notion of a "problematization" in his investigations of the history of ideas. Rather than simply presenting various theoretical representations of perceived problems in the history of thought, Foucault "brackets" their solutions and concentrates on the process of problematization itself.[33] The history of thought deals, therefore, with a precise moment of critical reflexivity in which thought intervenes and crystallises an authentic question of investigation. By not focussing on the different responses themselves, Foucault wants to discover "the general form of problematization that has made them possible".[34] In other words, a history of the conditions which makes possible the transformation of difficulties and obstacles into a general problem for thought. This moment opens a theoretical horizon, while simultaneously defining the possible elements, within which solutions may emerge. This type of investigation does not exclude, therefore, a historical examination of the breakdown and reconstruction of theoretical problematics, nor an analysis of those possible responses which were excluded in the constitution of a new paradigm.[35]

The history of problematizations which Foucault presents in the second volume of his history of sexuality reconciles the archaeological and genealogical approaches.[36] In a revelatory summation of his life project in the introduction to The Use of Pleasure, Foucault presents his usage of the archaeological and genealogical techniques within an economy of problematizations as follows:

> I seemed to have gained a better perspective on the way I worked - gropingly, and by means of different or successive fragments - on this project, whose goal is a history of truth. It was a matter of analysing, not behaviour or ideas, nor societies and their 'ideologies', but the **problematizations** through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought - and the **practices** on the basis of which these problematizations are formed. The archaeological dimension of the analysis made it possible to examine the forms themselves; its genealogical dimension enabled me to analyse their

formation out of their practices and the modification undergone by the latter.[37]

Thus the archaeological moment in his most recent investigations refers to the clearing of a space in which it is possible to isolate discursive formations. This distancing allows the investigator to "bracket" the meaning and significance of discursive formations and focus on their historical conditions of existence, or, in periods of crisis, their conditions of dissolution. The genealogical dimension examines the historical emergence of discursive configurations. The genealogist concentrates on the power struggles and hegemonic battles between possible solutions or strategies which occur in the interstices opened up by the failure or transformation of discursive ensembles.[38]

I use Foucault's various methodological concepts in two ways. Firstly, as a methodological device for tracing out the development of Castells' interventions over time. Secondly, as one of the means of evaluating the different phases of Castells' work. In this second sense, I employ Foucault's methodological operations to evaluate Castells' different approaches. To anticipate some of the arguments outlined in this dissertation, I argue that the initial phase of his investigation is best depicted as an archaeological endeavour. This is because it presents an objective, detached and scientific account of the structures which underpin urban politics. The later investigations could be described as genealogical accounts in that they concentrate on the historical production and transformation of urban meanings and practices.

The second approach to the texts under consideration is drawn from Derrida's deconstructive reading of the Western tradition.[39] While not wishing to enter into a detailed presentation of Derrida's textual practices at this stage (a more elaborate account will be presented in Chapter 6), the "methods" and goals of such an approach ought to be discussed. Deconstruction is primarily a textual practice or labour.[40] As Descombes has argued, it follows a double reading of texts.[41] Which is to say that it seeks to uncover the metaphysical constitution of textuality while, at the same time, showing the impossibility of this

construction.[42] By focussing on the limit-points or undecidables of texts, deconstruction shows how some possibilities are necessarily excluded in order to satisfy the conditions of metaphysical discourse.[43] For this to be possible, Derrida acknowledges that duplicity and ambiguity are inscribed in the structure of the discourses he deconstructs. In order for this to be shown the logic of the metaphysical discourse has itself to be understood.[44] It is not, therefore, a simple rejection of alternatives but the active exposure of expelled possibilities which are the objects of investigation.[45]

The structure of this dissertation reflects the different themes and methodological exemplars which I have touched on in this introduction. Part One provides an account of Castells' various problematizations of urban politics. This involves the presentation of a genealogy of the different phases through which his work has passed since the publication of The Urban Question in 1972, as well as an archaeological investigation into the theoretical and historical conditions which structure these different problematizations. Chapter 1 outlines the "early" Castells' search for a legitimate object of urban political analysis by presenting his epistemological critique of the urban sociological tradition and his attempt to construct an alternative scientific problematic. Chapter 2 discusses his early approach to the study of urban politics by concentrating on his conception of urban political practices and by isolating his analysis of urban social movements. Chapter 3 focusses on the "transitional" and "later" stages of his work. Here I elaborate some of the impulses behind, as well as the philosophical and substantive content of, the transformation in his approach to urban political theory.

The next two parts of the dissertation represent my attempt to deconstruct Castells' various arguments by simultaneously tracing out the constitution of his discourses and weakening his efforts to articulate his arguments in an apodictic fashion. Locating those instances of closure in which certain possibilities are ruled out, I aim to open the space for alternative theoretical constructions. Part Two is concerned with an evaluation of Castells' earlier writings. In Chapter

4, I set out to critically evaluate the philosophical and meta-substantive propositions which underpin Castells' earlier writings. This entails a close reading of the Althusserian reformulation of dialectical and historical materialism, as well as a critical examination of the relationship between the Althusserian paradigm and Castells' earlier methods and assumptions. Chapter 5 interrogates the earlier Castells' structuralist conception of urban politics and, in particular, his accounts of urban social movements in advanced industrial societies which are presented in The Urban Question and City, Class and Power respectively.

Part Three attempts to "open out" and expand the philosophical and theoretical possibilities in Castells' later writings on urban politics. Thus in Chapter 6 I investigate the usefulness of Castells' revised epistemological and methodological assumptions and procedures, and suggest some ways in which I think his later arguments can be developed upon. To do this, I begin the chapter by outlining some of the conditions which I believe have to be satisfied in order for a radical materialist ontology to be possible, and then examine the later Castells' approach in relation to this schema. Chapter 7 is concerned with the meta-substantive propositions and concrete theses which Castells puts forward in The City and the Grassroots regarding urban social movements and urban politics more generally. Here I put forward a number of theoretical arguments and concepts which I believe can deepen the usefulness of Castells' approach to urban politics, and form the basis for a research programme for urban political analysis.

Part One

A Genealogy of Castells' Writings on Urban Politics:
from The Urban Question to the City and the Grassroots

Chapter 1

The Search for an Urban Problematic in Castells' Early Writings

Castells' initial attempt to construct a theory of urban politics in a scientific manner can be very clearly delimited. It is located in a precisely articulated theoretical space – the Althusserian reading of Marxism – and is directed at the previously elaborated tradition of urban sociological analysis. These theoretical markers, together with the dramatic political events in Paris during May 1968, provide the contours which bring his initial formulations into relief.

For a number of reasons, The Urban Question represents an important theoretical and political intervention. In the first instance, the book spearheaded the emergence of the "new urban sociology" which was to revitalise the field of urban research during the 1970s and 1980s.[1] In the second instance, The Urban Question provided a sophisticated theoretical framework for the investigation of social and political processes which had become increasingly prominent in advanced capitalist societies and cities.[2] Lastly, the text attempted to grapple with the new social forces which had burst onto the political scene in the post-1968 period.[3] In all of these areas, The Urban Question, however hesitatingly and tentatively, pointed to the need for a new approach to questions and problems which conventional theories, in particular the Marxist paradigm, found progressively more difficult to explain. The disintegration of clearly defined class identities, alongside the changing conditions of production and consumption, made orthodox theoretical assumptions and accounts difficult to sustain. However, while Castells' initial arguments certainly address some of the emergent problems posed by the changing situation, it has also to be said that The Urban Question itself remains for the most part trapped on the outmoded theoretical terrain. It is this tension and the eventual shift away from this terrain that the first part of this dissertation examines.

The Urban Question grapples with a vast subject matter: nothing less than the critique and attempted reformulation of the entire urban sociological paradigm. Although this has the advantage of exposing a variety of issues for analysis, it contains certain drawbacks. Such an ambitious undertaking is necessarily exploratory, provisional and underdeveloped. As Castells himself suggests in the "Epistemological Introduction" to the text, the book could not possibly have reformulated completely the ideological problematic from which it emanated. Rather, it "merely communicates certain experiences of work in this direction, with the aim of producing a dynamic of research rather than establishing a demonstration".[4] While the unfinished quality of the text, and the wealth of theoretical determinations contained within it, makes a critical reading a rewarding exercise, the task of exposition is doubly difficult. This is because one is confronted, at times, with a surplus of ideas and observations which lack a coherently articulated set of theoretical syntheses.

As I have suggested, The Urban Question draws heavily on the Althusserian current of Marxism both for its philosophical and substantive inspiration. This is the case in the formal presentation of his arguments which serves as the "proof" of his theoretical discourse. The text opens with an initial problematization of the urban question, that is, the attempt to present the range of problems and issues raised by the history of urbanisation and the production of spatial forms.[5] The second part consists of Castells' critique of the urban sociological tradition. This reading of the tradition serves as the ideological raw material which Castells wishes to transform into theoretical categories and concrete knowledge.[6] This section is analogous, therefore, with what Althusser calls Generalities 1.[7]

The third part of the text represents Castells' endeavour to construct a new scientific problematic centred on a legitimate object of investigation.[8] Having outlined the structure of this object - the urban system - at a high level of abstraction, Castells proceeds to utilise his newly elaborated theoretical concepts to elucidate particular social practices and concrete historical situations. This production of new

facts and knowledge constitutes what Althusser calls Generalities 3.[9]
Part Four of The Urban Question is concerned with the concept of urban
politics which, for Castells, is vital for the analysis of any social
process or structure. This part of the text begins with some abstract
remarks about the concept of the political, and more specifically the
field of urban politics, before presenting a number of theoretical tools
for the study of concrete historical conjunctures. The section concludes
with a number of case studies of urban political processes in which the
various theoretical determinations and methods are employed in more
concrete research endeavours.

To explicate the themes which are presented in his early work, most
notably in The Urban Question, I have divided my account into two
chapters. In this chapter, I shall concentrate on Castells' critique of
the urban sociological tradition, and his attempt to construct an
alternative theoretical framework centred on a legitimate theoretical
object of investigation. In Chapter 2, I shall examine Castells'
conception of urban political practices, in particular his theorization
of urban social movements, and then illustrate his abstract propositions
by analysing his more concrete accounts of urban social movements.

**The critique of urban ideology: the search for a real object of
investigation**

In The Urban Question, Castells aims to outline a scientific analysis of
urban politics by constructing a new theoretical problematic. This
entails the elaboration of an authentic object of investigation. Using
Althusser's philosophical framework, he attempts to transform a corpus
of ideological "raw materials" – the previously elaborated theoretical
and empirical analyses of "urban sociology" (Althusser's Generalities 1)
– into a qualitatively different scientific product. This new product
should embrace two elements: specific knowledge pertaining to concrete
situations (Althusser's Generalities 3) and theoretical tools of
investigation with which these concrete analyses may be realised
(Althusser's Generalities 2).

This method of isolating, and then critically disengaging, an ideological field of investigation follows Althusser's reflection on the "epistemological break" in Marx. But there is one important difference. Whereas Althusser's analysis assumes the foundation of scientific theory, that is, the existence of dialectical and historical materialism (Generalities 2), Castells is confronted with a complete lack of genuine theoretical work. As he suggests, he is faced with the "the almost total predominance of...ideological elements...and the virtual non-existence of elements of already acquired knowledge in this field, in so far as Marxism has approached it only marginally".[10] If he is to follow the Althusserian schema he must, therefore, theoretically produce Generalities 2 and 3.

To begin with, Castells argues that the previous tradition of urban social analysis fails to specify proper objects of investigation. Instead, the various efforts to ground urban analysis remain on an ideological terrain in which the urban qua urban has no specificity other than legitimising the smooth reproduction of the dominant social order. Thus the urban tradition provides the theoretical and political conditions for the maintenance of different forms of class rule. The elaboration of a scientific approach to the problems engendered by the urban problematic is thus designed to demystify and expose the true nature of urban problems so as to provide a guide for investigation and political practice. More particularly, Castells' critique of this ideological tradition has two objectives. Firstly, he seeks to show that the problems identified by the ideological tradition are presented as natural and self-evident results of a peculiar phase in the evolution of human societies, that is, the emergence of technologically advanced societies characterised by the increasing subordination of the "the natural world" to human domination. The ideology of urbanism systematically distorts the major cause of these urban problems which, in Castells' eyes, reflect the structural contradictions of capitalism and the division of the social order into antagonistic classes. Secondly, by drawing upon and then radicalising some of the concepts and concrete analyses elaborated by those he criticises, Castells uses his

critical reading of the tradition as a means of constructing an alternative theoretical framework.

To make these remarks more concrete I will briefly discuss Castells' critique of the "urban cultural tradition" in which he focusses on the social function of urban ideology, as well as the "historicist voluntarism" of Henri Lefebvre. After this, as a precondition for examining Castells' alternative mode of theoretical production, I shall touch on Castells critique of the "ecological school". In particular, I shall focus on the arguments articulated by the Chicago School of urban sociology, aspects of which Castells has subsequently employed in the construction of alternative objects of analysis.

The genealogy of Louis Wirth's essay "Urbanism as a way of life" condenses a number of central themes in the urban sociological tradition. The genesis of the article can be traced back to the way in which the Chicago School, most notably Robert Park, appropriated the German sociological writings of Tonnies, Simmel and Spengler.[11] Wirth's project can be viewed as an effort to synthesise two divergent conceptions of sociological theory. On the one hand, he incorporated the German sociological tradition which had attempted to rethink the dialectics of nostalgia and authenticity in the aftermath of a destructive industralisation.[12] That is, the effort to construct an authentic social order in the face of the constitutive loss of community and solidarity.[13] On the other hand, he drew on the more brutal "materialist" spatial and ecological determinism characteristic of early American sociological theory.[14] More particularly, his aim is to provide a causal determination between the city as an ecological unit, characterised by three spatial aspects of dimension, density and heterogeneity, and the social content described as "urban culture".[15] On the basis of this hypothesis, Wirth was able to explain the different features of "urban culture". Hence, the emergence of particular urban social conditions such as anomie, lack of participation, anonymity and so on, and the breakdown of "traditional" forms of social life which followed the growth and dominance of associative over community relations, were accounted for by reference to specific changes in the

spatial organisation of society.[16] As a result, in Castells' words, "the city is given a specific cultural content and becomes the explicative variable of this content. And urban culture is offered as a way of life."[17]

Castells' critique of Wirth, and what he calls more generally the "myth of urban culture", is threefold. Firstly, he questions the method of postulating a causal connection between "urban forms", conceived exclusively in spatial terms, and particular socio-cultural relations.[18] Apart from presupposing a "naturalistic" and empiricist conception of the city as a "real object", Castells argues that this precludes, from the outset, any attempt to specify a real object of urban study in terms of the **interaction** between space, as a real material element, and the structures that constitute social life. As he argues:

> Consequently, the mere description of the process does not inform us as to the technico-social complex (for example, the productive forces and the relations of production) at work in the transformation. There is, therefore, a simultaneous and concommitant production of social forms in their different dimensions and, in particular, in their spatial and cultural dimensions. One may pose the problem of their interaction, but one cannot set out from the proposition that one of the forms produces the other. The theses of urban culture were developed in an empiricist perspective, according to which the context of social production was taken to be its source.[19]

As a second objection to Wirth's project, Castells disputes the particular social content which Wirth attributes to "urban culture". This cannot, according to Castells, be reduced to the three spatial dimensions of an "urban ecology", because these aspects are so general that they embrace the totality of capitalist social relations.[20] Although Wirth typifies this social transformation as a movement from traditional to modern forms of social organisation, the peculiarity of urban phenomena are subsumed under this all embracing panacea called "modernity". "Urban culture", therefore, becomes synonymous with modern society as a whole. In this sense, Castells attempts to show that the features abstracted by Wirth as typical of "urban culture" may be understood more scientifically in terms of Marx's account of the capitalist mode of production.[21] Thus, apart from misconstruing the

processes delimited as "modern", Wirth, and theorists of urban culture generally, effectively denude the possibility of a distinctive urban sociology by equating culture and space at a far too general level of abstraction.

For Castells, the necessity of specifying both the interaction of spatial and social dimensions, as well as isolating the distinctiveness of urban reality, presupposes the "de-construction" of the "urban" in previous theoretical paradigms. This entails breaking up the notion that "urban culture" represents "the true culmination of history in modernity."[22] According to Castells, an ideological conception of urbanism, in which urban processes and problems are made synonymous with liberal capitalism, functions to mystify the underlying causes and contradictions of these phenomena by presenting them as the inevitable consequences of modernization. In this way, the "myth of urban culture" legitimises one set of social forms by valorising its social significance, while presenting its negative features as natural products of social evolution.[23] The third critique of the "urban cultural" approach hinges, then, on its ideological role in providing a frame of "common sense" or "shared experience" through which urban phenomena may be appreciated.

Instead of diagnosing the reasons for the emergence of different cultural forms through an analysis of social contradictions, class divisions and political struggles, the urban culturalists present society as a unified, organic ensemble evolving in a linear and natural manner.[24] In this way, the alienating effects of new social forms and environments, are presented as a struggle between "man" and the natural and technological constraints confronting him. The city, in turn, is presented as a neutral battleground, a site of contestation between the forces of creativity - the people - and the technico-natural forces brought into being through their activity. For Castells, therefore, the real problems of everyday life experienced by people in capitalist societies, while correctly described by the culturalists at the surface level, are presented as a struggle between man and nature, creativity and technological oppression, and not as a struggle between different

classes reflecting an antagonistically structured social configuration.[25] The social efficaciousness of this ideology emerges because it simplifies the problems of urbanism and prevents an examination of the real social processes underpinning the cultural and ideological forms produced in given societies.

Castells' critique of Henri Lefebvre's efforts to theorise the urban field from a vigorous revolutionary Marxist perspective is on the first reading difficult to fathom. As Castells himself suggests, Lefebvre's reflections on the problem of urbanism attempt to demystify the myth of urban culture.[26] They also emphasise the question of collective consumption and the politics of reproduction which will be central to Castells' early perspective.[27] Finally, Lefebvre valorises the necessity of class struggles to bring about the transformation of oppressive structures.[28] Castells' strong criticisms of this perspective, especially when compared to his more tolerant reading of the Chicago School, reveals the extent of Althusser's philosophical and sociological influence on his work. Firstly, Castells strongly criticises Lefebvre's displacement of traditional Marxist categories to diagnose the problems of capitalist society and what he describes as Lefebvre's substitution of "an **urbanistic theorization of the Marxist problematic.**"[29] Secondly, Castells opposes Lefebvre's efforts to examine urban processes separately from the more traditional elements of Marxist theory, such as the mode of production and the class struggle.[30] By adopting such an approach, argues Castells, Lefebvre restates the ideology of urbanism and fails to place its problems in an appropriate context of investigation. Rather than outlining a genuine object of investigation, Lefebvre reinforces the idea of the urban as it is produced in the ideological discourses of capitalist societies.[31] Thirdly, Castells criticises Lefebvre's so-called "voluntaristic" conception of the social.[32] In particular, Castells opposes what he sees as Lefebvre's overemphasis on human action in the explanation of social processes. This critique of action and agency, as well as the emphasis on the structural determinants of subjectivity, is central to Althusser's rethinking of the dialectic and is used by Castells' to criticise the entire sociological tradition.

In his critique of the "culturalist" and "voluntarist" approaches to urban studies, Castells endeavours to break open the "ideological envelope", as he puts it, by locating the question of urbanism in a new and qualitatively different "social context".[33] This entails the introduction of a historical materialist framework of analysis, derived from Althusser's reading of the materialist dialectic, and the clearing of a relatively autonomous space for the analysis of the urban domain within this newly articulated framework.[34] How he does so, will be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

The specification of a real and theoretical object of investigation: urban space and the urban system

Part 3 of The Urban Question elaborates an alternative theoretical problematic for the investigation of urban phenomena. This entails the delimitation of legitimate real and theoretical objects of analysis. Castells introduces this analysis with a discussion of space in general.[35] Here he draws together the critical commentaries presented in his deconstruction of the urban sociological tradition and sets out the conditions for a scientific reading of urban space. These new theoretical conditions, which he argues will displace the largely ideological terrain of the previous tradition, are derived extensively from Althusser's (and to a lesser extent Balibar's and Poulantzas'), symptomatic reading of the materialist dialectic.[36] Thereafter, Castells proceeds to deploy the scientific theoretical tools more concretely by outlining the different elements of the social structure in relation to their spatial expression. Having provided a different set of theoretical conditions for apprehending the elements of the urban structure, Castells is in a position to specify theoretically the real and theoretical objects which will ground his examination of more particular urban practices and political processes.

General questions about space

With regard to the general question of space, Castells aims to provide a theoretical framework which can go beyond the two dominant poles of the

sociological tradition. The one pole, which was articulated around the interventions of the Chicago School's "human ecologists", stressed the determining role of the environment in shaping urban space.[37] The other pole opposed the crude biological determinism of the ecologists. Of the latter, some emphasised the essential role of cultural values, effectively reversing the "hard material ecologism" of their adversaries, while others adopted what Castells has called a "voluntarist" or "historicist" conception of society, in which human actions and practices were constitutive of urban sociology and society more generally.[38]

Against the idea of a necessary opposition or, as in Wirth's attempted synthesis, an irreducible tension, between the determination of space by nature and its shaping by culture, Castells proposes to articulate the two dimensions in a problematic which "recognises the specificity of the humanly social without seeing it as simply a deliberate creation which cannot be explained by laws."[39] In opposition to the "ideological discourse" of culturalism and historicism, Castells argues for a theoretical framework which can incorporate the "materialist-based" problematic of the Chicago ecologists alongside a sociological perspective which stresses the contradictory action of social agents.[40] Castells' articulation of the ecologists does not stem from the fact that he agrees with their substantive propositions and methods, but rather because they stress "structural" or "material" constraints on the values and practices of human beings. In other words, Castells aims to focus on the activities of social agents, for him the struggle between classes, in so far as that focus is also grounded on a structural basis which informs the functioning of social formations. Operating as he does from within the Marxist tradition, this structural "web" consists of the particular mode of production which structures a given social formation. Thus Castells hopes to reconcile the opposition between the "objective" and "subjective" aspects of social existence.[41] Whereas the analyses of Lefebvre or Tonnies tended, for example, to underestimate the objective material and environmental determinations, while the ecologists, for their part, were not able to account effectively for the social production of material forms, Castells

ventures an alternative approach. This is grounded on the discovery of
objective structural laws of the production of spatial forms, and an
analysis of the social structure considered as a "dialectical process of
relation between two elements [the spatial and the social, the natural
and the cultural (D.H.)] by means of social practices determined by
their historical characteristics."[42]

Castells' project has until this point been primarily negative and
critical. It has consisted of isolating the problems engendered by
previous traditions of research, and enumerating certain tasks necessary
to ground urban analysis on a surer footing. Following his reading of
Althusser, Castells' next step is to produce a scientific analysis of
urban phenomena by delimiting authentic real and theoretical objects of
analysis. Though his reading of previous urban discourse had revealed
the predominance of the ideological over the theoretical, he
nevertheless salvages two problematizations from the ruins of the urban
sociological tradition which he argues may serve as the basis for real
objects of urban analysis. In the first instance, the specificity of the
relationship between space and social processes central to the work of
the Chicago school. In the second instance, questions surrounding the
processes of collective consumption referred to by Lefebvre in relation
to the politics of everyday life.[43] Having proposed these two hypotheses
as possible real objects of investigation, Castells then proceeds to the
elaboration of a theoretical system.[44]

Substituting a new theoretical context: the articulation of space and
society

By extending the Althusserian reading of the materialist dialectic into
the sphere of urban analysis, Castells brings the various elements of
the social structure into a conceptual relationship with space as a
material entity. This allows him to elaborate the spatial expression of
social processes. Taking his cue from Althusser he writes: "To analyse
space as an expression of the social structure amounts...to studying its
shaping by elements of the economic system, the political system and the

ideological system, and by their combinations and the social practices that derive from them."[45]

Following Althusser, the economic system in class societies is determinant in the last instance and is also the locus of the dominant contradiction.[46] By this, Castells means that the economic sphere determines the form of and specifies the major axis of antagonism in the social formation as a whole.[47] As such, the economic system is organised around the relations between the labour force, the means of production and those social classes not involved directly in the production process (that is, those who own and control the means of production). As a set of practices, the "economic" refers to the social process by which the worker, acting on the object of his labour (a given raw material), with a given ensemble of productive means, obtains a certain product.[48] These different elements are specified around two principal relations. Firstly, the exploitative appropriation of property in the form of the product of the production process - the commodity in the capitalist mode of production - and, secondly, a relation of "real appropriation", as Castells puts it, in which the labour force is dominated by the labour process itself, a system wholly elaborated and controlled by the ruling classes.[49] The specification of the economic system in space is expressed in the dialectical interplay between the principal sub-elements of the system: **production, consumption** and **exchange.** In this regard, production is made equivalent to the spatialization of the means of production, consumption refers to the spatial expression of labour power, and exchange, which is derived from the two principal elements, represents the spatialization of transferences between production and consumption.[50]

The political-institutional system, for Castells the "politico-juridical apparatus", also has a specific articulation in space.[51] It is organised around the two relations of domination-regulation and integration-repression.[51] Borrowing from Poulantzas' theorization of the state in capitalist societies, Castells argues that the function of the capitalist state is the political organisation of the ruling classes and the systematic disorganisation of the dominated classes.[53] This is

realised through a number of structural features of the capitalist state, such as the "isolation effect" of the political-legal system, as well as political practices conducted by the ruling classes through particular institutions of class domination.[54] These institutions of the state system are divided into "ideological" and "repressive" state apparatusses.[55]

Castells also discusses the role of the ideological region of the capitalist social formation which he calls the "urban symbolic".[56] For Castells, this sub-system organises and marks urban space with a network of signs whose signifiers are particular spatial forms and whose signifieds are the ideological contents of the dominant classes.[57] Here he makes use of semiotic analysis so as to present urban ideology as co-terminus with the linguistic sign. In other words, ideological practices are divided into signifiers and signifieds in which the various significations which construct the meaning of urban forms are explained by reference to their particular class content.

As an essential prerequisite for producing the concept of the urban system, Castells begins by specifying in both theoretical and empirical terms the different relationships between space and the social structure.[58] As he notes, in "ideal" circumstances a fully fledged structuralist methodology would entail the initial articulation of the total system.[59] This would then make possible the "individuation" of the constituent elements and their possible forms of logical combination.[60] Castells presents an account of the different elements **before** attempting to construct his theory of the urban system. This is accomplished by isolating the peculiarly "urban" processes in the general relationships between space and structure. Only thereafter does he establish a structural schema for the investigation of the urban.

For my purposes, it is not necessary or possible to examine all the theoretical and empirical combinations presented by Castells in this preliminary "clearing exercise". Suffice it to draw attention to the primary processes specified by these conceptual demarcations and the major contradictions around which these relations operate. At this stage

of Castells theoretical development, it means concentrating on the economic reading of urban space.[61] In relation to the productive dimension of the economic system, Castells concentrates on the question of industrial location and the spatial tendencies associated with the capitalist mode of production. Because the economic system dominates the capitalist mode of production in Castells' analytical framework, the production element is the basis of the organisation of space in capitalist societies.[62] According to Castells, the production aspect of society embraces not only industrial installations, but the technological environment as a whole, as well as the location of offices for organisation and management.[63] In his examination of the factors shaping the spatial distribution of production, however, he concentrates on the social logics centred around the location of the major productive unit: the industrial plant or the factory.[64] At a high level of theoretical abstraction, Castells argues that the major impulse directing the organisation of space in capitalist societies is the maximisation of profit.[65] For Castells, this motivation is not determined by a simple "cost-benefit" analysis, but by a calculation based on the ensemble of economic, technological and political relations structuring decisions and overall tendencies.[66]

His conclusions about the tendencies in monopoly capitalist societies are clear. As a result of changes in the production process itself - increased flexibility and interchangeability of production methods, the homogenisation of mass markets, the expansion of international economic networks facilitating easier movements of capital and information, improvements in transport systems and shifts away from heavy industry to more sophisticated production techniques - there is an increasing mobility and a systematic "freeing up" of location in relation to geographical limitations. In this sense, Castells argues that, from a strictly technological point of view, space is becoming increasingly undifferentiated.[67] This means that the specificity of the urban context is becoming less determinate in shaping the production process. It must be said, though, that he adds a rider to the effect that this freeing is not absolute in that there will still be a certain

salience which will very strongly militate against the location of industries in certain areas.[68]

Castells then concentrates on the space of consumption and what he calls the spatial process of the reproduction of labour power.[69] Here he is concerned with the processes surrounding the reproduction of labour power. The reproduction of labour power, for Castells, specifies a number of processes depending on whether this takes place on a daily basis (the reproduction of any existing labour force), or whether on a generational basis (the provision of new generations of workers to replace the existing working class). It is also specified in terms of whether it is the simple or extended reproduction of labour power. That is, whether it concerns the replenishment of expended labour power, or the development of new capacities of labour power.[70] For Castells, the means by which these variegated requirements are satisfied are wide-ranging and include housing and hospitals, social services and schools, leisure facilities and cultural amenities.[71]

In his preliminary investigation of this sphere, Castells examines three issues: the housing question, urban segregation and stratification, and the "ideological problematic of the enviroment".[72] To illustrate this spatial relationship I will briefly focus on the question of housing in the reproduction of labour power in capitalist societies. Castells concentrates his analysis on the housing crisis which confronted France during the time in which he wrote The Urban Question, though he argues that the French case is a typical example of the housing question in capitalist societies more generally.[73] The major thrust of Castells argument suggests that although capitalist societies require the systemic reproduction of labour power, and though the provision of housing constitutes one of the central aspects of this process, French capital has found the production of housing, particularly cheap housing for the working classes, unprofitable.[74] Low cost housing, at the time Castells conducted his research, did not yield sufficient surplus value for French capitalists. When this was coupled with a generally long period of profit realisation, it made the incentive to invest in this needed commodity structurally problematic.[75]

Thus although both workers and capitalists, for different reasons, needed the production of housing, this demand tended to remain unsatisfied. In this way, Castells situates the relationship between consumption and space around the structural contradiction in the logic of the capitalist mode of production.[76] He does this by locating the structuration of space at the level of consumption processes – the need for housing – and in the context of a struggle between classes which, as will be shown later, has to be understood in relation to the different interventions of the capitalist state.[77]

Defining the urban problematic: specifying a real and theoretical object of analysis

Having disaggregated the different elements of what he calls the "urban system", in effect a presentation of the conditions of spatial expression of the different levels and structures of the capitalist mode of production, Castells proceeds to the critical task of delimiting his real and theoretical objects of investigation.[78] Following his interpretation of Althusser, this requires the delimitation of a real object which identifies what has to be studied. This is achieved by "a certain conceptual cutting-up of reality".[79] It then involves the construction of a theoretical framework built around a legitimate theoretical object of investigation.

In order to constitute a real object of investigation, Castells begins by asking a simple question: "What is the specificity of an urban area, space or unit in capitalist societies?"[80] Following his earlier discussions about space and social structure, Castells suggests that to answer a question about the specificity of space, and in particular the peculiarity of urban space, is equivalent to conceiving of relations between the elements of the social structure within a unit defined by one of the instances of the social structure. In other words, working from his "regional" conception of the social formation, he attempts to isolate a space which can be defined in ideological, political or economic terms. By a process of elimination, therefore, he attempts to specify a co-incidence between spatial and social processes. His

reasoning is as follows: the urban cannot be· specified by the ideological instance in capitalist societies although, in the urban tradition, this has been the most widespread conception of the urban. This would simply reproduce the old equation of an urban unit with its ideological representation, and the "city" would be another expression of capitalist and modernist domination separated from the conditions of its production. To regard the urban unit as a juridico-political unit would at best confuse an outmoded historical phenomenon with the realities of advanced capitalist societies. Whereas, for example, the Greek polis had a political specificity, just as the city in Medieval times had a distinctive political connotation for Max Weber,[81] Castells argues that the political and juridical apparatuses have no specific spatial dimension in capitalist societies. Taking an example from the history of French imperialism, Castells asks on what grounds, prior to 1962, it would have been possible to consider Algeria a part of the French social formation, even though it was politically articulated to the French state?[82]

Castells is obliged to look at the economic level. Following Althusser, he divides the economic instance into three sub-levels: the means of production, the means of consumption and the exchange process. Searching for a process which is spatially confined, Castells rejects production and exchange because in the modern capitalist world system these functions have become increasingly "trans-spatial". This is because the existence of multi-national corporations, as well as the increasing globalisation of the production process, presupposes a production process which is not spatially delimited.[83] Similarly it is clear that the process of exchange, which mediates between production and consumption, cannot be territorially defined. The space of consumption, however, directly related in Marxist discourse to the reproduction of labour power is, according to Castells, spatially organised and defined.[84] Thus for Castells the **urban** connotes "directly the processes relating to labour power other than in its direct application to the production process" and **urban space** becomes space defined by a section of the labour force, delimited both by a job market and by the (relative) unity of its daily life."[85] In this sense, the

notion of urban space, which expresses the articulated units of urban processes, serves as a real object of investigation. It is around this object that a theoretical ensemble can be constructed.

To provide a theoretical framework with which to understand the different elements condensed in urban spatial units, to specify the relationship between urban processes and the wider social structure, and to outline the rules of its operation, Castells proposes the concept of the **urban system.**[86] The urban system specifies the articulation of the three instances of the social structure within a spatially delimited urban unit. The political level corresponds to the realm of urban administration, in particular, the role of local government and other agencies of the state, and functions to ensure the overall cohesion of the urban system.[87] This guarantees ruling class domination and the regulation of contradictions which are manifested between the divergent instances of the social formation. It is achieved through the integration and repression of the dominated classes by the various organs of state power.[88] The organisation of the ideological region of the social formation in the urban system corresponds to what Castells names the "urban symbolic". Castells is referring here to the fact that urban space and urban forms are charged with social meaning and, rather than examining this meaning in an autonomous fashion, thereby reducing the urban to its cultural expression in specific discourses, he proposes to examine the question of urban meaning in relation to the production of ideological discourse. Here he focusses on the legitimation of a social order through different mechanisms of communication by which subjects come to recognise or misrecognise their conditions of existence.[89]

Each of the three sub-elements of the economic instance correlates with different elements of the urban system, that is, factories and offices with production, the organisation and provision of facilities such as housing, recreation, schools and green spaces with consumption, and the means of transportation with exchange.[90] According to Castells, the consumption element is the defining characteristic of the urban system. At the level of the urban unit, this element expresses the

reproduction of labour power. Here Castells distinguishes between the simple and extended reproduction of labour power. The former case - the replenishment of expended labour-power - corresponding to the supply of housing and minimal material amenities such as drains, lighting and roads, and the latter instance - the development of new capacities of labour power - referring to the availability of amenities such as green spaces, the levels of pollution and noise, and so forth. He also adds other dimensions of analysis to the understanding of the extended reproduction of labour power by demarcating the refraction of the three principal instances of the social formation in this sphere. Thus, within the economic system (biological reproduction), he stipulates those aspects of the urban system concerned with the environment (green spaces, pollution, noise), within the political system he specifies the schooling system, and within the ideological apparatuses he delimits the socio-cultural amenities of the urban system.[91]

In this way, Castells introduces a series of sub-elements which distinguish analytically between the different instances of the urban system. A final aspect of the urban system concerns the breakdown of the different sub-elements of the structure into the so-called **system of places**.[92] Here Castells introduces the categories of levels and roles to specify further the possible relations pertaining to a given sub-element of the urban system. Thus within the sub-element of housing (corresponding to the simple reproduction of labour power, that is, one of the sub-elements of the consumption element of the urban system), Castells distinguishes different levels such as luxury housing, social housing and slums, and delimits different roles which include the lodger, the tenant, the co-owner and owner. Taken together, the analysis of different levels and roles enables Castells to determine the contradictory places among which social agents will be distributed according to their position in the social structure. The purpose of this "taxonomic fury"[93] is to make possible the analysis of concrete situations, that is, to isolate in a more rigorous fashion the contradictions in the system and to determine which social agents express those contradictions through their social practices.[94] All of these structural relations which make up the urban system, when taken

together at a particular point in time and space define   the **conjuncture**
of an urban system. These relations form the structural web in which to
place the different support-agents (political subjects) which define the
object of Castells' concrete investigations: **urban social practices.**

The concept of the urban system is also employed by Castells to
specify the relationship between the urban system qua sub-system and the
wider social system. In other words, the concept is articulated
alongside more general categories of analysis such as the social
formation.[95] Here Castells is concerned to outline in general terms the
particular function and role which the urban system performs in the
overall reproduction of the capitalist system. He also wishes to point
out the possible forms of political antagonism which, if articulated
together, might contribute to the transformation of the capitalist
social order.[96] From Castells' delimitation of a real object of
investigation, it has been shown how the urban system functions to
reproduce labour power in capitalist societies. When functioning
properly, the urban system ensures the smooth reproduction of the system
as a whole. But, for Castells, any reproduction of the system in
capitalist society is necessarily contradictory. Hence the urban system,
as a particular microcosm of the wider system, is also a locus of
contradictions.[97] In certain conjunctures, and given the appropriate
political organisation, these contradictions may become instrumental in
the modification of the urban system and/or the social system more
generally. This touches on the centrality of urban politics in Castells'
schema and, more specifically, on the question of urban social movements
and their relationship with class struggles. These questions will form
the basis of Chapter 2.

The "rules of functioning of the urban system", as Castells puts it,
specify the general rules of the mode of production.[98] This means that
the urban system is a dominant system in the overall framework of
capitalist reproduction. In structural terms, it is located on the
plane of the production element. And with regard to social practices
(for Castells, the plane of relations), it is the relation of ownership,
rather than real appropriation, around which struggles tend to

crystallise.[99] Although, therefore, the urban system has a relative autonomy from the wider system and a particular internal logic, it is nevertheless only at the level of the whole system that the urban system is reproduced and can be transformed. In other words, only contradictions and antagonisms at both the urban and "global" levels make possible the creation of new structural rules.[100]

Although on the surface the formal specification of these real and theoretical objects appears to hinge on the simple correlation or non-correlation between spatial and social processes, Castells' delimitation rests on two hypotheses concerning spatial processes in advanced capitalist societies. They are, firstly, the tendency for space to be increasingly structured by the simple and extended reproduction of labour power and, secondly, the emergence of urban practices which are intimately bound up with this spatial concentration of labour power.[101] His justification for these hypotheses is two-fold. Firstly, he argues that tendentially the increasing concentration of capital in advanced capitalist societies is paralleled at the level of consumption. This has resulted in the growing concentration of the labour force and, correspondingly, a growing spatialization of the provisions of everyday life, such as habitation, eating, recreation and sleeping, through which labour power is reproduced. Secondly, he argues that these spatial units of everyday life are increasingly structured by the changing requirements for the reproduction of labour power in the capitalist system as a whole.[102]

For Castells the urban system in no way describes reality directly or informs us of particular conjunctures. It is strictly an analytical concept which is to be used to elucidate social practices and understand historical situations. This allows the researcher to discover their laws of operation. As a formal construct specifying the structural laws and elements of the urban problematic, the idea of the urban system enables Castells to make an initial approach to the study of social situations without being able to explain their social production or transformation. To do this would require a theorization of the social practices through which structural laws were realised or transformed.[103] Thus Castells has

to complement the structural logic of the urban system with an examination of social and political practices. This entails the introduction of social agents into the structural field of the urban and social system. It also requires a theorization of the **link** between the two aspects. For Castells, this means that he has to bring the structural field of the urban into a conceptual relationship with the system of class relations and the political scene. This is to be achieved through an analysis of the various institutional interventions which take place in the urban system, and an examination of the social movements and political forces which call it into question.[104] In other words, by focussing on the attempted regulation and transformation of contradictions arising in the urban system, and their relationship with the wider social system, Castells proceeds to an examination of the politics of the urban. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

To conclude, this chapter has attempted to show how Castells' critical reading of the urban theoretical tradition is premised on Althusser's structuralist reading of Marxism. Drawing a sharp epistemological division between the scientific and the ideological, Castells tries to demonstrate the groundlessness of the urban tradition of research. He then endeavours to outline a scientific account of the urban by delimiting authentic objects of analysis. This is achieved by deploying Althusserian theory in the analysis of space, and consists of determining the structural laws which underpin urban processes in capitalist societies. These structural laws define the particular elements in the urban system and the relational logics through which these elements function. Having provided this scientific and objective basis for the investigation of urban phenomena, he can then proceed to a theorization of the political dynamics of urban phenomena.

Chapter 2

The Early Castells' Theory of Urban Politics

Until Part 4 of The Urban Question, Castells presents an account of the structures of the urban system, and their relationship with the wider social structure, at a high level of abstraction. In other words, he attempts to outline the structural laws which are assumed to be in operation if the urban system is to reproduce itself. Even though he assumes that the capitalist system is inherently contradictory and susceptible to change, Castells is not yet able to characterise the **production** of urban systems, nor to explain their possible **transformation**. Moreover, by presenting his concepts at a high level of abstraction, he is not in a position to analyse the specificity of concrete historical conjunctures. To elucidate the historicity of the urban process in different social contexts, he has to examine the political process. He must locate the urban process within particular relations of power which, he argues, following Poulantzas, condense the ensemble of social relations in a given conjuncture.[1] Having traced out the structural framework for an analysis of the urban, Castells now supplements his remarks with a consideration of political practices.[2]

Accounting for urban political practices

Faithful to his philosophical approach, Castells begins his examination with a consideration of political practices in general.[3] He outlines his conception of the political, mainly derived from the work of Nicos Poulantzas, and traces the emergence of urban political analysis through a critique of the "community power" debates which emerged in Anglo-Saxon considerations of power, pluralism and community studies during the 1950's and 1960's.[4] He then outlines a set of theoretical tools for the study of urban politics.[5] In this regard, he sets out the structural determination of urban practices and breaks the field of political analysis into an investigation of urban planning and urban social movements. He then specifies the connection between the abstract

theorization of urban political practices and the concrete investigation of particular situations. Finally, he presents a series of empirical case studies – amounting to research in progress – as a demonstration of his general theses on urban politics.[6]

The general field of politics

The central problem facing the analysis of politics and power in the social sciences, according to Castells, stems from the separation of structural laws, on the one hand, and the understanding of social and political practices, without reference to the laws of social structure, on the other.[7] Following the earlier writings of Poulantzas, the question of politics is defined by the field of power relations and is not to be conceptualized simply as a regional instance of the social formation. Politics thus condenses the ensemble of social relations in a given historical situation.[8] Power relations express the relations between social classes, where social classes are depicted as particular combinations of contradictory places in a given social formation, and where the concept of power reflects the capacity of one class to realise its objective interests at the expense of another.[9]

Castells' theorization of political relations accepts that at the level of social structures each social formation is determined in the final instance by the economic level. Thus the matrix of any social formation is structured in accordance with the principles of the dominant mode of economic production. At the level of particular historical conjunctures, however, political relations are the primary consideration. More particularly, Castells stresses the political class struggle directed at the maintenance or destruction of the state, and it is at this level of power relations that the problem of transformation in a social formation can be posed.[10]

This conceptualization of politics enables Castells to clarify the relationship between the laws of the social structure and political practices. To begin with, Castells argues that politics does not exhaust an account of a given social reality. Other factors, particularly

economic processes, exercise an important and determining role. Any objective analysis requires, as an essential precondition, a structural analysis of the elements, relations and laws underpinning a given social matrix. The role of political practices does, however, constitute the "first element" of sociological analysis, in that it "structures the whole field of the social as well as determining its modes of transformation."[11] For example, an investigation of proletarian political struggle would begin by outlining the laws of the capitalist mode of production in order to detect the structurally antagonistic relations between the owners and non-owners of the means of production. It would then examine the supports of the labour force, before examining the specific historical and conjunctural conditions which made a particular political struggle possible. These conjunctural conditions include levels of consciousness, types of political organisation and events which may have triggered political conflicts. Castells combines, therefore, a structural analysis of the matrix of any given social configuration with an examination of political processes to account for a particular situation and its concrete historical possibilities. For Castells, this is a way of superseding the intractable structure/event dyad and goes some way in explaining the relationship between social structures and social action.[12]

These prefatory remarks are equally applicable to the study of urban politics. The structures of the urban system account for the internal logic of historically given spatial forms, but only the organisation of urban political practices produce relatively autonomous effects.[13] In this way, the study of urban politics goes to the centre of the urban problematic. This is the case for theoretical and empirical reasons. In the first place, it enables Castells to situate the articulation of urban processes and issues within the field of the class struggle, and to introduce the centrality of the political instance - the capitalist state - as the object of political struggle. Secondly, as urban problems in advanced capitalist societies become increasingly politicised, and as class domination becomes evident in domains such as consumption as well as production, so the urban question is integrally tied to contradictory political manifestations in contemporary societies.[14]

The emergence of the urban political tradition

Having presented a preliminary sketch of his general approach to the question of politics, Castells turns his attention to the urban political tradition.[15] More specifically, this entails an initial distancing manoeuvre vis-a-vis the tradition, so as to isolate the overall contours of this discursive formation, followed by a critical account of the errors and advances of the liberal and Marxist-structuralist problematics. Two aspects will be examined in this regard: Castells' genealogy of the urban political tradition and his critical reading of the assumptions underpinning this body of discourse.

Castells' genealogy is designed to isolate what "urban politics" means in the tradition of urban political analysis. Why and how are are urban issues deemed to be political? How are they then analysed? By considering some of the tensions and contradictions in the "community power" debates,[16] Castells suggests that two key approaches have organised the field of investigation. One approach focusses on political processes and conflicts within a particular community, while the other approach questions the complete autonomy of the local level and argues that the determination of urban problems extends beyond the confines of a specific community to embrace the wider social system.[17] Following the typology presented by Robert Wood,[18] Castells proposes three ways in which urban problems emerge and can be treated politically:

1. the administration of urban problems by the institutional system (local, regional or national), which Castells gathers under the heading of **urban planning**;

2. the emergence and expression of urban issues as a result of mobilization and conflict amongst opposed social groups, which Castells names **urban political struggles**;

3. the study of **local political institutions**, which reconciles the analysis of urban planning and urban political struggles, insofar as "they are the expression of the power relations on the local political scene and the locus of articulation of urban problems at the level of the institutional system."[19]

Within the area demarcated by these three themes of urban political analysis, Castells locates two contrasting and contradictory approaches, both of which he argues are symptomatic of the entire sociological tradition.[20] They are, firstly, liberal perspectives which focus on the intentions of individual actors or agents in the decision-making process and, secondly, Marxist accounts which concentrate on the determinations of the social structure. The investigation of this dichotomy forms one of the main leitmotifs of Castells' entire reformulation of the urban question. He questions the idea that social agents have intentions upon which they make decisions. More precisely, Castells queries the relative importance conceded to the role of "decision-makers" in liberal accounts, as well as the philosophical methods and assumptions underpinning these analyses. Unless liberal analyses aspire to no more than empirical descriptions of particular cases, they must, according to Castells, rest on metaphysical assumptions and methods of investigation. The metaphysical postulate which Castells problematizes is the hypostatisation of human subjectivity and autonomous social agency. This takes the form of the "freedom of man" or "the metaphysics of freedom".[21] Those approaches which presume an autonomous source of intentionality, embodied in the idea of an essential human nature, are unable to explain the political constitution of subjectivities, the different historical forms which subjectivity takes (citizenship, nationalism, class, and so on), or the social conditions and political contexts in which decisions or non-decisions occur.

According to Castells, there are three available strategies for research programmes which begin with presumed actors. Firstly, the concrete actors are simply regarded as empirical objects amongst others. Secondly, actors are treated as privileged realities with certain essential characteristics. Lastly, the actions of social agents are only understood against the backdrop of theoretically constructed social contexts. For Castells, the third strategy of explaining the "intentions" and "autonomy" of social agents, represents an advance over the other options because it subverts the very idea that social agents can be considered independently of the social situation in which they

find themselves. In this way, Castells problematizes the liberal idea of a pre-given object of analysis: the autonomous human agent endowed with consciousness. Focusing on the way in which social meaning is conditioned by historical processes, Castells stresses the need for an explanation of the processes of subjectification and the political practices emerging from these processes.[22]

Theorising urban politics

Castells' critical reading of the tradition of urban political analysis, coupled with his redefinition of the urban problematic, provides the elements with which he will construct an alternative framework of analysis. Urban politics is seen to break down into three interrelated components: the "urban", the "political" and "politics".[23] In setting out this new approach, the "political" comes to designate,

> the instance by which a society deals with the contradictions and dislocations between the different instances that compose it, and reflects the structural laws, expanding them, thus assuring the realisation of the interests of the dominant class.[24]

In urban terms, the "political" relates specifically to interventions in the reproduction of the labour force and is seen in the field of urban planning and urban policy. These designations correspond to Poulantzas' idea of "the political".[25]

The concept of "politics", by contrast, designates the system of power relations in a given social formation, in which power connotes, "the capacity of one social class to realise its objective interests", and in which "objective interests" means "the predominance of the structural element (which define by their combination, a class) over the other elements that are in contradiction with it."[26] It is in relation to the categories of politics and power that Castells situates the question of urban social movements. A social movement is defined as "the organisation of the system of social agents (conjuncture of class relations) with the aim of producing a qualitatively new effect on the social structure (relevant effect)."[27] By relevant effect, Castells stipulates two specific situations: a qualitative change in the **structural** law of the dominant instance of a mode of production and, at

the level of **practices**, a modification of the power relations, running counter to the institutionalised social domination. The most important aspect of this being a change in the system of authority or in the organisation of counter-domination.[28]

Although, these two fields are analytically separable for Castells, in reality they are indissolubly linked. State intervention is ultimately the expression of the class struggle and social movements are only effective when articulated with class struggles. It is to this dialectical relationship - the emergence of urban social movements and the role of the capitalist state - which for Castells goes to the heart of urban politics in advanced capitalist societies, that we now turn.

Central to Castells' project has been the critique of voluntarist conceptions of political practices. In opposition to this he has stressed the structural determination of social action. In other words, he emphasises the systemic nature of political processes and the contextual nature of political struggles. Before outlining Castells' approach to urban politics, it is necessary to examine the structural determinants and methodological procedures in his analysis of urban political practices. The structural determination of urban practices is designed to enable Castells to explain why, when, how and with what consequences urban political practices occur. In other words, he wants to set out the conditions which make these practices possible and intelligible. More specifically, with regard to his analysis of the **structures** of the urban system (the study of urban planning), this will enable him to examine the consequences of a particular urban problem - a contradiction around the provision of services for example - in relation to the regulation of the instances of the urban system and the overall exercise of class domination. With regard to **practices**, Castells wants to "detect the process of formation of some of the practices (by an examination of the structural combinations on which they are based)" and to define their effects on the social structure.[29] More concretely, this allows Castells to describe and explain three aspects of urban political practices:

1. the structural combination out of which the practices emerged.

This is achieved by examining the characteristics of the social agents engaged in a particular set of practices;

2. the capacity to classify the types of urban political practices through analysing the ideological horizon which conditions the possible effects of given practices;

3. the construction of a "natural history" of particular urban struggles through an investigation of the effectiveness of urban political practices in bringing about transformation.[30]

Castells' system of structural determination embraces a number of dimensions. The major series of determinants centres on the contradictions, regularities and places of the urban system. Every "urban problem", whatever its particular form, is defined and acquires a social significance by being placed in the conjuncture of a given urban system.[31] Yet because the urban system is always part of the wider social structure, an understanding of urban problems is also determined by the instances of the social system.[32] This articulation is necessary in that urban agents occupy a position in the wider social structure and a position internal to the urban system. Another central structural determination of urban practices is the articulation of the urban system with those organisational forms which either fuse together or disarticulate urban political practices.[33] In Castells' hierarchical system of determination, the analysis of organisational forms - types of social movements, political parties, and so on - presupposes the decomposition of urban practices into a system of social agents. This disaggregation is made possible by pinpointing the structural causes of an urban issue.

A central aspect of Castells' project centres on the possibility of forging a relationship between social structures and concrete practices. The key linkage between these two dimensions is provided by his conception of social agents or, as Castells puts it rather inelegantly, "those-men-who-make-their-history-in-particular-social-conditions".[34] In this sense, Castells emphasises the subjective dimension of practices though not without some conceptual difficulties. As he suggests, "the link between systems and between the different problems thus treated

cannot be established by a structural link, but by the mediation of actor-supports".[35] However, continuing in the same passage, he argues that,

> (T)hese actors, in so far as they do not exist themselves, but through the elements that they convey, must also be defined in a way specific to the urban system in connection with the place that they occupy in the other instances of the social structure.[36]

Similarly, in other contexts he gives little effective autonomy to practices:

> Urban practices form a system. But they have no significance in themselves. Their only significance is that of the structural elements which they combine. These combinations are realised by means of actors, through the determinations and multi-dimensional memberships of these actor-supports. The field of urban practices is a system in which given combinations of structural elements are themselves combined.[37]

In this sense, urban practices have very little autonomy. What autonomy there is, is **relative** autonomy,[38] a concept derived from Althusser and Poulantzas, which, as I shall show later, serves no more than a linguistic or descriptive function, and fails to explain the dichotomy between structures and practices or move to its dissolution.

A structuralist account of urban social movements

We can now turn to an examination of Castells' attempt to outline a relationship between structural determination and practices. Here, I will attempt to draw the threads of Castells argument together by showing the connections between the abstract logics of the urban system and his theorization of concrete political phenomena. As I have outlined, the structural determination of urban practices comprises of a system of possible permutations which, when combined together in particular conditions, form concrete urban practices. To demonstrate the inter-connectedness of Castells' conceptualization of urban politics, I will examine Castells' analysis of the relationship between urban social movements, on the one hand, and the urban system, the general social structure and the level of social organisation on the other.

To begin with, let us look at the urban system. The practices which urban social movements link together are integrally related to the

structural elements and relations of the urban system. An examination of
this relationship requires that the instances of the urban structure and
the concrete practices be disaggregated. Hence, for example, in the case
of consumption issues the structure divides into several sub-instances.
Thus in the case of housing one sees this sub-element split into
different **levels** such as luxury dwellings, public housing and slums.
These sub-elements are also differentiated in terms of the roles such as
lodger, tenant, co-owner and owner, which are contained within them.[39]
The **issue** or **stake** around which an urban social movement forms is also
structurally determined. Thus, for example, an urban social movement in
the housing sphere would be based on the elements relating to the
contradictions between the requirement that the labour force be
concentrated in agglomerations and the unprofitability of providing the
necessary collective means of consumption.[40] In concrete terms, the
stake becomes a struggle over rent reductions, rehousing, or access to
public housing conducted by actor supports such as slum-dwellers,
tenants and so on. In this way, a connection can be made between the
practices and the structural contradiction out of which they arise.

Building upon this system of analysis, Castells is able to construct
a typology of urban practices.[41] He then offers some general rules
governing the operation of urban social movements.[42] Firstly, the more
contradictions that are accumulated the greater the chance of a movement
emerging. Secondly, the more the contradictions are located in the
economic instance, the more powerful the ensuing social movement is
likely to be. Thirdly, the more the contradictions are divided up by the
state, for example, the less chance of a mobilisation and confrontation
taking place. Fourthly, the articulation of wider economic and political
practices alongside urban practices increases the efficacy of urban
movements at the level of power relations.[43]

The last hypothesis brings us to the relationship between urban
social movements and the **wider social structure.** According to Castells,
purely urban practices and struggles are condemned to be reformist.
Paradoxically, an urban social movement, defined by its actual rather
than potential effects, is a contradiction in terms in that it is unable

to produce qualitatively new effects.[44] However, this does not mean that urban struggles are necessarily relegated to the world of administrative reform. They can, and do, assume an importance in certain political situations when, even though they are structurally secondary in relation to the balance of power relations, they become conjuncturally principal.[45] By this Castells means that, although urban social movements are secondary in the overall struggle for socialism, when they are linked together with broader movements such as trade unions, they are able to "tip the balance" in favour of those forces opposing capitalist social relations.[46] Seen from this perspective, Castells is attempting to outline a possible form of articulation between urban and class struggles, while still retaining the primacy of the latter.

This brings us to the relationship between urban social movements and **social organisation.** While social agents permit the construction of combinations between structural elements, the role of organisation is fundamental for Castells' analysis. This is because organisational forms are essential in determining the condensation or dissipation of urban political practices. However, while the analysis of organisational form is crucial, it is not the defining feature of urban social movements. The defining characteristics of urban movements are determined by the "effects" they produce on the system and not by the particular means to those ends. Without the correct organisational capacities, however, contradictions would be expressed in forms other than those of urban social movements. They would manifest themselves in either a "Utopian" (purely an ideological challenge) or "wild" form (simply "spontaneous" forms of resistance).[47]

An organisation is defined by Castells as the crystallisation of social practices. This does not mean that all occupants of a structural organisation will form an organisation. To account for this, Castells distinguishes between the "membership horizon" and the "reference horizon".[48] The former refers to the actual actors engaged in struggle and is determined by the objective structural contradictions, whereas the latter designates the potential of a movement to realise its objectives. This "reference horizon" is expressed in the political line

adopted by the movement. If a movement is to progress beyond the interrelation of elements constituted simply by urban actors, it needs to import practices from the wider social structure.[49] If the movements do not do this, they merely become agents of reform. Similarly, if a movement fuses together various practices in an all-encompassing ideology, the result is a totalizing opposition which for Castells signifies a "revolutionary Utopia".[50] It becomes, in other words, a movement with global ideological designs which is unable to link a particular social base with its social force. When the social base and social force are linked together, and when they are articulated alongside a wider social practice (though not subsumed in an overall unity), the movement possesses a correct political line and a "contestatory" organisational base. It is in these conditions that an urban social movement is likely to emerge.

Having presented this exposition of Castells' theoretical conception of urban social movements, one can now examine the methodological underpinnings of his work. It is important to note that he presents an essentially a priori methodology, since reality has been cut-up before research begins. While Castells warns us that this approach is completely arbitrary, in that no empirical object has been delimited, he asserts that a **style of work** can be presented in order to provide a link between the theoretical and empirical aspects of his work.[51] This is justified because Castells has a "certain confidence in the analytical force of the Marxist concepts that have, up to the present, increased the legibility of the social web, providing these have been sufficiently specified in relation to the object in question".[52] Using this approach, Castells' starting point is not the level of practices – the analysis of political organisations, for example – as traditional sociology would have it, but the level of structures. This entails the mapping out of structural contradictions which give rise to urban mobilisations.[53]

Given this, his methodology follows three consecutive steps. Firstly, he maps out the issues or stakes, and codes them in structural terms. Secondly, he charts the various social groups involved in relation to each issue and codes them in the same terms.[54] Thirdly, he

characterises the types of organisations that arise and determines their articulation with the system of social agents. With this investigative grid, Castells is then in a position to address particular concrete situations.[55] This process involves "the demonstration of a law, insofar as the analysis realises such a law in becoming intelligible through the relating of the real elements subjected to our theoretical codification."[56]

Some concrete examples of research on urban social movements

In order to illustrate Castells' highly abstract analysis of urban social movements, I will present some of his empirical case studies. These are included by Castells to demonstrate some of his central hypotheses and arguments, and they serve to clarify and develop his theoretical propositions. I shall focus on what Castells calls the "challenge to the urban reconquest of Paris: the struggle for rehousing in the Cite du Peuple".[57] The Cite du Peuple, as Castells describes it, was "an old quarter of Paris, with a high proportion of working class residents and a strong concentration of ethnic communities and immigrant workers".[58] The issue which engendered the mobilisation of the people in Cite du Peuple arose, according to Castells, out of the contradictions between the poor housing conditions experienced by the people and the logic of urban renewal or "reconquest". The process of urban renewal resulted from excessive demands for profit by property developers.[59] By way of historical context, Castells shows that the movement arose in 1965 when approximately 100 000 families, who were badly housed, were allocated about 7000 homes by a para-statal group - the Paris HLM - which was an organisation set up by the French State to provide low-cost housing.[60] The protest campaign which ensued was accelerated when residents were threatened with direct eviction. Eventually this campaign achieved some success when land was granted by the Prefecture of Police of the city of Paris for the construction of low cost housing. However a crucial area of struggle remained: the new houses that were constructed were not allocated to the people who demanded them.[61]

It was against this background that various mobilisations took place. Two mobilisations which emerged in the Square Gaiete and the Presqu'ile centred not so much on the quality of housing, but the inadequate compensation which was offered in the aftermath of the renewal project.[62] Furthermore, the demand was made for an operation-tirrior, that is, piecemeal renewal in which only small areas would be developed and in which people would be rehoused one by one.[63] This was opposed by the urban renewal companies because it was in opposition to the fundamental logic of urban renewal, that is, the large scale construction of "better quality housing" which would maximise profits.[64]

At the level of the social structure, the Square Gaiete was, according to Castells, composed of a strata of people situated above the average working class positions. There were fewer skilled and unskilled workers, and an overrepresentation of craftsmen and tradesmen.[65] Yet they lived in poorer quality housing than the rest of the quarter. Here renewal was weakly resisted. After vehemently opposing the renewal plans and after securing an apparent victory, "a certain hesitation crept in", and the mobilisation was divided by a process of "individualising" the conflict.[66] In other words, the renewal company and the state planners dealt with each of the residents in turn and succeeded in circumventing the resident's organisations.

As this process got underway a new issue arose. It concerned the area called the Impasse Phillipe in which people known as the conciergos, residents who were to be removed without compensation, were being evicted. Out of this, there emerged an Anti-Renewal committee which was composed of students with "an all encompassing Leftist ideology". They planned an elaborate campaign with a powerful radical ideology. However a number of factors prevented this charged issue from realising qualitatively new effects. To begin with there were what Castells calls problems of conjuncture, in which the Anti-Renewal committee became detached from its social base, that is, the organisation's political line was not rooted in the experiences and demands which formed the social base. Moreover, the Anti-Renewal committee displayed an overall amateurism in their campaign. There was

little contact between the organisation and the social base, and no regular meeting-point, such as a campaign office, available for the people. Thus, instead of the Anti-Renewal committee acting in the community's immediate interest - securing compensation and access to housing - they attempted to fuse economic demands with broad ideological contestation. Because of this, the movement was soon diffused.[67]

The area known as the Presqu'ile reflected a similar situation, but the issue became more dramatic. The population was characterised by a marked predominance of workers, immigrants and ethnic communities and the deterioration of housing was more pronounced than in most other quarters. Yet, paradoxically, the degree of renewal was less advanced. Castells suggests this was because of increased resistance, and a high degree of mobilisation and political activity directed against the renewal body.[68] Consequently, the urban renewal body, in conjunction with the state, employed a "panoply" of intimidatory measures which included windows being walled up as people left, inadequate maintenance of public thoroughfares and threats about securing satisfactory rehousing. It was against this process of diffusion by the state which, for Castells, at times "verged on Machiavellianism", that the mobilisation was deflated.[69]

As a result of these state activities, people began to leave and within a few months over a thousand homes had been vacated.[70] In a situation similar to the one described in the Impasse Phillipe mobilisation, a new issue arose amongst those residents who remained behind. In the rue de la Boue, an area which remained intact after renewal had begun, a novel kind of intervention emerged.[71] The rue de la Boue was inhabited mainly by unskilled workers, immigrants or North African Jews. Onto this ensemble was grafted a new organisation directly concerned with political activity. The organisation centred around young workers and "proletarianised" students who lived in the quarter. These people became involved in the community by, for example, carrying out repairs and organising social activities. In this way, they kept in constant contact with the social base. Moreover, the activists attempted to link the specific demands of the community to a more global political

consciousness. Although these militants were aware that the resistance was small and weak, and that the power of the state would eventually sap the energy of the protesters, their main objective was to raise a collective consciousness and engender a greater political radicalisation amongst the community. In this regard, the organisation did achieve what for Castells amounted to a political effect.[72]

In interpreting the results of these empirical investigations, Castells attempts to establish the logical inter-relationships between the different protest actions. This he does by two procedures. Firstly, by breaking down the various connections he has outlined, a process he characterises as **analytic.** Secondly, by reconstructing the particular mobilisations, a process he calls **synthetic.**[73] Thus Castells isolates the relations between the elements of the protest actions. He offers the following interpretation of the case studies:

1. The more a general issue such as the threat of eviction is reinforced by a specific issue, the greater the confrontation between the organised mobilisations and the renewal groups/state.

2. The social force mobilised is always a specification of the social base. This specification derives clearly from the organisation. Hence if the social base and social force become detached the less likelihood of new effects emerging.

3. With regard to the connection between social base and type of organisation, Castells offers the following relationships: the more the base is working class and ethnically French, the more deep rooted the organisation. The more the base is situated at the "lower levels" of the social structure the greater its revolutionary potential. Castells does not specify exactly what he means by what he calls "socially low" but it presumably refers to the lower strata of the working class, possibly elements of the lumpenproleteriat, old age pensioners and groups which have become marginalised in a particular social formation. Lastly, any external intervention remains cut off from the social base and ineffectual.

4. The more diversified the adversary, the more the chance for a claim to succeed. Here Castells refers to the power of those social forces opposing the urban mobilisations, in particular, the role of the

state or the urban renewal bodies. Their efficacy would be shaped by the unity and availability of power that these organisations were able to command.

5. The closer the correspondence between the immediate interests of the social base and the claim, the more intense the action is. This correspondence, which is brought about by the organisation, must be understood as a material response, and not merely an ideological one, to the situation from which the claim derives.[74]

From the five conclusions, Castells presents two important hypotheses and then attempts to synthesise the separated elements so as to provide a typology of the social determinations of actions. To begin with, Castells suggests that urban effects depend directly on the issue, and on the level of mobilisation, whereas political effects depend on the type of organisation, and the articulation of grievances around an ideological horizon.[75] Hence in the case of the Square Gaiete mobilisation, there was an initial correspondence between social base, organisation, level of mobilisation and claim, but as soon as the political confrontation was displaced there emerged a gap between claim and issue which consequently caused demobilisation. In the case of the area of Presqu'ile, there was a correspondence between the various elements listed above, and it was subsequently reinforced by a defeat. However, the movement eventually failed because it remained purely at the level of a claims orientated mobilisation. Thus the organisation's political line led to its downfall. In the third mobilisation, in the Impasse Phillipe, there was an unfavourable "conjuncture", that is, poor management and a lack of facilities which, coupled with poor organisation external to the social base, caused the non-fusion of elements made possible by the structural disjuncture. In the last case, the rue de la Boue, social base, organisation and claim corresponded, but the issue ended with a claims defeat, involving the direct intervention of the state and the political radicalisation of the social base.[76]

Conclusions

By way of conclusion, I shall summarise the main elements of Castells' early conception of urban political practices and, in particular, his theorization of urban social movements.

1. Urban political practices form part of the wider social structure and cannot, except for purposes of analysis, be abstracted from the underlying social system. This needs to be qualified in two ways. Firstly, Castells' notion of an "underlying social system" is clearly derived from Althusser and, secondly, while urban social movements form part of the wider social system, their structural determination centres on the "urban system".

2. Urban social movements are defined in terms of the production of "qualitatively new effects" on the social structure. This is a central methodological premise in Castells' analysis, for the kinds of effects that movements produce explain the nature of the urban mobilisations. Hence it is only when specific effects are produced that a mobilisation can be classified as a fully fledged urban social movement. For example, when the "social base" and the "social force" coincide, but the movement is still able to link up with broader political practices. In this way, the correct political line which a movement should take is discerned by the effects it brings about.

3. Castells describes urban social movements in terms of political "practices". However, his structuralist conception of society leads him into an ambiguous position when he attempts to establish the relationship between structure and practice. It is my tentative hypothesis, which I shall develop below, that the rigid dichotomy between structures and practices is a formalistic or sociological system which, following the Althusserian model, leaves itself open to severe criticism.

4. Social movements emerge and are shaped by the structural contradictions of the system. In the urban system the principal contradiction hinges on the provision of the collective means of consumption.

5. On the level of practices, the effectiveness of an urban social movement is shaped by the kind of issue which emerges in the urban

system. Castells distinguishes different levels in this regard. For example, the more a movement is determined by economic contradictions, the more important and significant it is likely to be. Moreover, the structural contradictions in the urban system are likely to determine the type of social base and the kinds of organisation that emerge.

6. Urban social movements are primarily "conjunctural" political phenomena. They are the fusion of structurally determined contradictions and political practices at a specific moment in time. At this stage then, Castells' analysis is static and structural rather than dynamic and contextual. At the level of theory, there is no attempt to introduce a historical dimension into his analysis.

7. Most importantly, urban social movements assume an importance by virtue of the political changes they produce on the social system. Though urban social movements are deemed "secondary structural issues" - movements which do not pose a direct challenge to the dominant mode of production - they are not necessarily relegated to the world of administrative reform. As Castells asserts:

> Quite the reverse; their decisive importance (is) in certain political conjunctures ...for a structurally secondary issue can be a conjuncturally principal one. This means that the political importance of an urban movement can only be judged by relating it to the effects it has upon the power relations between social classes in a concrete situation.[77]

In this sense, urban social movements become politically significant when they link with more general struggles. In other words, when urban protests and mobilisations are articulated with workers struggles in a united political force against the capitalist system. Given this, the most important political implication of urban social movements lies, as Castells puts it, "in the streets."[78]

In the subsequent trajectory of Castells' writings two features stand out. Firstly, he attempts to develop some of his theoretical claims about the nature of the urban system, and the emergence and effects of urban social movements. Secondly, following the empirical deployment of his writings and growing criticisms of his approach, there was a progressive weakening of the strong claims that were put forward in The Urban Question. These two tendencies, both taking the lead from

his initial problematization of urban political theory, and represented in the publication of City, Class and Power and the City and the Grassroots respectively, form the basis of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

The Break with Althusserian Structuralism: City, Class and Power to The City and the Grassroots

In an important assessment of his initial theoretical framework - an "Afterword" to the first publication of The Urban Question in English - Castells made the following remark: "This book, written in 1970-71, was intended as a work tool - as a tool of theoretical work, of scientific research work and also, through numerous mediations, as a tool of political work. But, produced as it was in given historical circumstances, it had (and has) in relation to its aim, serious limitations and theoretical errors."[1] It would indeed be strange if a theoretical system as elaborate and ambitious as Castells' early text did not undergo transformation. Changing political, theoretical and historical conditions make shifts in a conceptual schema both inevitable and desirable. Having outlined in some depth the contours of Castells' early effort to ground urban theory, we can now turn to Castells' progressive deconstruction and recomposition of his earlier work, and to an assessment of the crucial strategic decisions that were taken, their peculiar conditions of possibility and how they mark the emergence of his later discourse.

The transitional phase of Castells' writings

In many senses The Urban Question was negative, preliminary and exploratory. Much of it was directed against the existing urban tradition so that the alternative theoretical categories were tentative and suggestive, rather than comprehensive and fully-fledged. When coupled with some severe philosophical and theoretical limitations, one can only conclude that the work is problematic, producing more questions and criticisms than it can answer. Yet, for all the experimentation and difficulties, the early work represents an important contribution to our understanding of urban problems.

Moreover, it was not just a lack in Castells' text which was simply expanded upon in his later writings, nor a purely self-intended substitution of a more appropriate theoretical framework, that explains the content and "cause" of the transformation in his theoretical position. This would be to neglect the vitally important conditions - theoretical, political and historical - under which these transformations occurred. Our understanding of the deconstructive mechanisms at work in Castells' texts cannot rest on a teleological reading of discursivity, in which his later writings were already presaged in his earlier writings. Rather, we need to explain the conditions which made his particular ethico-theoretical decisions possible.[2]

Somewhat paradoxically the publication of The Urban Question which, for Castells, was to represent the dawn of a new age of urban sociology, occurred at both the apogee and nemesis of the Althusserian problematic. Althusser's ambitious attempt to rediscover the essential Marx and his attempt to use the structuralist model to make sense of social and political relations, were reaching the limits of their applicability.[3] The new discursive spaces which these intellectual interventions had opened up were rapidly being closed off. Many of the targets against which these projects were directed - economic determinism, the questioning of the constitutive subject, the problem of origins and the opposition to teleological explanations - were either unresolved or remained problematic. The vaunted intellectual breakthrough which the linguistic model promised had not materialised.[4]

These theoretical closures made the attempt to read the social texts of the post-1968 world in a meaningful manner extremely difficult to do. The events of 1968 have rightly been described as the resurgence of popular protest and politics in advanced industrial societies in the post-War period.[5] Some have suggested that it represents a radical continuation of the democratic revolution in a way which connected these events to the revolutionary ruptures of 1789, 1848 and 1919.[6] And, although The Urban Question placed itself squarely in relation to these dramatic events, the theoretical context which ordered its categories

soon proved, along with other Althusserian projects, unworkable.[7] Two reasons for this may be cited. Firstly, the form of political protest, though clearly manifest on a mass level, no longer conformed to a purely "classist" orientation, but involved new social subjectivities not accounted for in Marxist discourses. Secondly, these mobilisations tended to emerge at a distance from the once organised centres of resistance - the trade union movements and the Communist parties.[8] For all the Althusserian endeavour to "modernise" the Marxist tradition, the old orthodoxies of the Marxist tradition hampered a meaningful engagement with the "post-1968" universe. For the time being, these new conditions can be simply enumerated without any clear theoretical ordering: the crisis of the "Fordist" regime of accumulation, the break-up of the post-war social democratic settlement, the emergence of a new "post-Fordist" or flexible regime of accumulation, growing disillusionment with the welfare state consensus, and so on.[9] The failure to provide a more flexible theoretical problematic with which to make sense of new social formations, was replicated on a strategic level. Not able to diagnose the conditions of advanced capitalist societies, nor for that matter the position of "underdeveloped" so-called Third World countries, the Left political strategy either became increasingly divorced from the realities of concrete political struggles and developments or, in its more organised forms, increasingly defended institutions and settlements to which it was connected ambivalently.[10]

These pressures - widespread theoretical critique, major social and historical changes, an increasing marginalisation of conventional Left-wing discourses, a strategic void in which the traditional Leninist positions were challenged - cleared a new space of emergence for theoretical discourse. Ironically, Castells' early texts can be seen as a direct response to these very processes. This included an attempt to articulate the possibilities of political subjectivities not confined to the old classist model, the examination of consumption as well as production processes, the extension of Marxist categories into a field reduced to essentialist theoretical frameworks and an effort to outline a political strategy which would incorporate rather than reject new political agents. Ultimately, however, he failed to carry through this

radicalisation of the Marxist tradition because he remained imprisoned within a new set of theoretical dead-ends.

The following remarks on what I have called the transitional phase in Castells theorization of urban politics examine Castells' effort to radicalise his conception of urban social movements in a changing context. They are situated in the space of the crisis opened by the failure of his early paradigm. I will examine two important texts which represent Castells' effort to reconstruct his paradigm: "The Afterword" to The Urban Question and a collection of essays entitled City, Class and Power.[11] My discussion of these ideas will concentrate on four aspects. Firstly, Castells' rethinking of the epistemological and methodological premises of his earlier system; secondly, the substantive implications arising out of these premises; thirdly, his reconceptualisation of the nature of urban social movements and, finally, his effort to reformulate his conception of the state.

Castells' shift on the epistemological and methodological plane was evident in an article written as early as 1972 in which he rejects Althusser's distinction between ideology and science.[12] Later, in the same article, he asserts that a materialist epistemology cannot be reduced to the simple application of pre-established rules.[13] In the 1975 Afterword to The Urban Question, his doubts become more explicit. Theory and knowledge do not start in the abstract and then confront reality; rather,

> one must choose between, on the one hand, the idea of a "Great Theory" (even a Marxist one) which one then verifies empirically, and, on the other hand, the proposition of a theoretical work that produces concepts and their historical relations within a process of discovery...theory is not produced outside of a process of concrete knowledge.[14]

Thus he acknowledges that his early position was too formalistic and mechanical. The production of knowledge is not simply the coding of reality, but the construction of working hypotheses which are flexible enough to engender further concepts and knowledge of reality.[15] As Castells puts it:

> Because there was an immediate need for a theory, it was applied too mechanically...Generally researchers applied established theories

without modifying them to the reality observed. In some cases it was Althusserian theory...[in which]...the theoretical coding has been too rigid, too formal, the reality analysed was more complex than the models used.[16]

His subsequent analyses, particularly evident in his theorization of collective consumption in the "Afterword", show a clear rejection of Althusser's epistemological practice and an endorsement of what might be called a realist interpretation of Marx's method.[17] Thus, collective consumption is derived from a process of retroduction in which concepts are abstracted from concrete reality and presented logically in their inter-relationships.[18] Hence Castells does not give himself a privileged position above social relations and historical processes, but abstracts from those relations themselves. At this point his arguments are akin to the criticisms of the Althusserian school which have been made by the British school of realism such as Roy Bhaskar, Andrew Sayer and Derek Sayer.[19]

This transformation in Castells' understanding of how knowledge is produced has important implications. In the first place, he introduces an empirical and comparative component into his research programme. He also employs a historical perspective to account for a dynamic social reality. Thus society can no longer be reduced to the structural logic of capital. "Perhaps", he asserts, "the focus should have been the historical transformation of the urban, rather than the conceptual deployment of Marxist theory."[20] Moreover, this "transformation of the urban" must be rooted in an analysis of the historical development of the "class struggle".[21] Castells thus concentrates on the analysis of practices and experiences rather than the ineluctable logic of capitalist contradictions. This is clearly shown in his analysis of the "French experience" in which he analyses the historical relationship between classes, the state and urban policies in a particular period.[22] The dynamic of class struggle is taken as the most important dimension in the shaping of society.

While Castells moves away from a structuralist conception of reality his approach remains ambivalent. Of particular importance here is the

dichotomy between structures and practices. This is particularly evident in his reexamination of urban social movements. In City, Class and Power, he argues that "only a dialectical theory of reciprocal action between different elements of reality which refuse the distinction between structure and practice can set us on the right path to answering this question."[23] There is still, however, some ambiguity in his attempt to construct a dialectics of social action for he concludes by asserting that "this contribution must be located within a general theory of social movements whose debate is still largely floundering between structuralism and subjectivism."[24] Thus there still appears to be dualistic conception in which a logic of **class struggle** exists side by side with a necessary and structuralist **logic of capital**. Castells' analysis of urban social movements still focusses on their structural determination and their effects on the system.[25] Although he acknowledges the problem and attempts, therefore, to graft an historical and dynamic element onto a rigid theory of structure, he fails to address the dualism in a theoretical way. More specifically, he fails to produce a conception of agency, whether this be conceived as the human subject or the relatively autonomous nature of class struggle.

The final aspect which is central to the transitional period is Castells' theory of the state. In his earlier work, the state was simply an atheoretical and ahistorical "fuse" reacting automatically to the demands of the capitalist system. In the transitional phase of his discourse, the state is a historically contingent "crystallisation of the class struggle" in a particular society.[26] Thus the state has to be theorised in terms of the contradictory relationship between social classes and, in turn, the relationship between the state apparatus and social classes.[27] Hence it is necessary to show the internal differentiation within the state, recognising its contradictions as well as its homogeneity. As he puts it:

> In order to specify (the state) one must be much more precise about the relation between class struggles and the state, and one must also stress the internal differentiation within the state, recognising its contradictions as well as its homogeneity, its diversity as well as its unity. If the theory of the state is to be reconstructed, and go beyond either pluralist empiricism or mechanistic Leninism, perhaps the most fruitful path to take is to

begin by a history of capitalist states which could identify class-state relations from the historical diversity of their formation.[28] The historical contingency, rather than the determined functionality of his earlier work, has important implications. Whereas in the early texts the state had to be smashed in order for a democratic and socialist transformation to be achieved, his new perspective suggests that "once the smoke has lifted from the battles of the Winter Palace, the revolutionary project must find ways to emancipate itself...Unable to seize the state apparatus, it must then penetrate it, dissolve it and transform it."[29]

This leads to an alternative political strategy, the so-called "democratic road to socialism".[30] Castells makes it explicit when he asserts that, "such a reality...[a democratic passage to socialism (D.H.)]...is a crucial challenge the left has to accept if it wishes to make some progress in using democratic institutions to transform the social order."[31] This shift seems to represent an endorsement of a Eurocommunist political strategy as opposed to the previous insurrectionary - fundamentally Leninist - strategy of change.[32] It has important implications for his theory of urban social movements. Instead of linking up with working class forces to achieve political effects, urban social movements are regarded as multi-class mobilisations which can form political coalitions aimed at securing institutional power at the municipal and local level.[33] Thus, because urban problems, restricted at this stage principally to crises of collective consumption - housing shortages, the provision of hospitals and schools, pollution, and so forth - do not by-pass the boundaries of middle class suburbs, pluri-class mobilisation becomes a possible and actual feature of urban social movements.[34]

Hence one can see the "internal" and "external" factors which formed the basis of Castells' transitional phase. The external factors provided the social and intellectual context against which Castells responded. It was precisely these elements of the "transitional phase" - the underlying philosophical and substantive premises, the nature of the state, and the relationship between urban social movements and social

change - which Castells pursued to their "logical" conclusion in his later theorization of the city. That is, as they were to be articulated in The City and the Grassroots, and in his theory of the capitalist city, The Informational City.[35]

The City and the Grassroots

Before one sets about analysing The City and the Grassroots, it is necessary to pose a methodological and a presentational difficulty encountered in assessing the work. In The City and the Grassroots, Castells' endeavour to ground his approach historically and empirically, results in a series of case studies from which certain theoretical concepts are constructed, confirmed or problematized. As he puts it in the introduction to the book:

> Relying on a series of case studies in different socio-cultural contexts we will try to understand how urban movements interact with urban forms and functions...[T]he reason for this method of presentation is that our theory is produced and not simply tested by the interpretation of our case studies.[36]

This approach is designed to counter the problems engendered by his previous methodologies which involved "the useless construction of abstract grand theories".[37] Of course this has important methodological implications for Castells' own work, but the immediate problem is how to account for these case studies without disregarding the theoretical syntheses Castells has produced. Clearly one cannot give a detailed analysis of every case study presented, nor is this desirable. However, they are crucial for an understanding of the theory. Hence I shall focus solely on the Citizens movement in Madrid which represented for Castells "the largest and most significant movement in Europe",[38] and constituted a mobilisation which "show[ed] the highest transformation of urban meaning".[39] In other words, as he attempts to demonstrate in the text, the Madrid Movement represents the most advanced form of urban social movements. Having done this, I shall then turn to the theoretical propositions Castells advances to explain his empirical findings.

The presentational difficulty which I have encountered entails the possibility of getting caught up in unnecessary detail. This is not to

say that much of this new work is worthless; on the contrary, the opposite is probably more accurate, since The City and the Grassroots is an impressive work which touches on many central aspects of contemporary political and social thought. What is required, however, is a clear definition of what we need from the text. What elements do we need to abstract from the new perspective in order to assess **how** and **why** Castells' work has undergone a fundamental transformation? What are the major substantive arguments he presents? To answer these questions, I will examine four key aspects of the new discourse:

1. the epistemological rules underpinning the construction of his new theory;

2. the methodological procedures which are followed;

3. the general theory of society and social change which is outlined;

4. the substantive theses which are generated by the new urban problematic and, in particular, Castells' reconceptualization of urban social movements.

Castells' main objectives in The City and the Grassroots are clear: during an historical period when cities are increasingly becoming an expression of opposition to the dominant structures and values of contemporary society, there is an ever-widening gap between urban research and urban problems. To fill this hiatus, Castells aims to analyse urban social movements and to assess their relevance for a theory of social change. At the heart of his revised conception of society is his view that: "Cities are living systems, made, transformed and experienced by people."[40] By analysing the relationship between people and the processes of urbanisation he will be able to provide a better understanding of cities as well as the citizens which make up such configurations.[41] Moreover, such a relationship, he argues

> is most evident when people mobilise to change the city in order to change society. For methodological reasons, thus, we will focus on urban social movements: collective actors aimed at the transformation of the social interests and values embedded in the forms and functions of a historically given city.[42]

In most respects the new perspective in The City and the Grassroots represents the culmination of a pattern of thinking which emerged in

response to the early critique of his Althusserian paradigm. He recognises that the preoccupation with theory was "a healthy response against short-sighted empiricism",[43] but that it was a too mechanistic and formalistic coding of reality.[44] By a formal theory, Castells means "a theory whose main concerns are trans-historical comprehensiveness and logical consistency",[45] a conception which leads to a "painful recording of observed experience, in which the conceptual frameworks add nothing to the understanding of that experience."[46] In its place, Castells proposes an epistemology which privileges **adequacy** over coherence and sophistication. Given the social sciences' relative underdevelopment in relation to the natural sciences, knowledge, according to Castells, must be generated from historical and empirical reality. Instead of transhistorical theories of society, Castells argues for "theorised histories of phenomena".[47] In this sense, Castells does not assume a privileged epistemological position as he did in his earlier conceptions of knowledge production. The fundamental criterion for a "valid" epistemology is the ability to generate new and flexible theoretical concepts. Adequacy becomes in effect a series of working hypotheses which facilitate the advance of empirical research, rather than a complete a priori theory.[48]

This epistemological position translates into an approach which must be rooted in empirical and historical reality. In The City and the Grassroots, Castells employs a case study method. Although he acknowledges that this method has been criticised for its singularity, each situation being a unique and exclusive one, he argues that all social phenomena are unique. Case studies are thus useful, if correctly chosen and properly used; that is, if they are employed as the "building blocks" for theory construction.[49] Bearing these qualifications in mind, Castells begins by posing a set of working hypotheses in an abstract fashion, before tentatively formulating a general theoretical framework. With this in mind, he chooses and investigates a series of social situations. "As a result of this work," he asserts, "new questions arose, several concepts were modified, some propositions were rejected, and new ones were incorporated into the general framework of our tentative theory."[50] These findings are then summarised into a more

general theory. After this has been completed, Castells returns to the case studies in order to reevaluate and correct some of his more ad hoc interpretations.

This method does not signal a retreat back into empiricism, nor does does it rely on a grand theory to "cut-up" reality in an a priori fashion. The method is dialectical in the sense that general concepts are presented in order to analyse reality, whereupon empirical analyses are used to modify the concepts. This method develops some of the ideas which were adumbrated by Castells in City, Class and Power. As I have suggested they are something akin to the "realist" interpretation of Marx's philosophy which is presented by theorists such as Bhaskar and Sayer. For example, Sayer has argued that "Marx's concepts are emphatically a posteriori constructs arrived at precisely by abstraction from the real and concrete."[51] In a similar fashion, it is claimed that Marx's dialectic is principally a methodological device which allows the logical ordering of abstractions. That is, the analytical breakdown of reality and its synthetic and logical recomposition.[52] This means that Marx's starting point for the analysis of society is indisputably historical rather than structural, as Althusserian epistemologies claim.[53] Castells' later approach to the study of social change embraces all these dimensions of analysis. Rather than emphasising the ineluctable logic of structures, Castells stresses the conflicting interests and struggles of historical actors. Hence he emphasises the Marx of class struggle rather than the Marx of economic and class determinism.[54]

The Madrid Citizen's Movement

I turn now to the Madrid Citizen's movement. The importance of this case study for our purposes is two-fold. It has an intrinsic value since it provides knowledge of what, in Castells' language, constitutes an urban social movement. On the other hand, it is presented by Castells almost as a Weberian ideal type. That is, when he investigated it, the Madrid Movement was, in Castells' eyes, the most fully fledged contemporary urban mobilisation. It assumes the status of an "analytical model"[55]

against which other movements can be measured. I will concentrate on four central aspects:

1. the social profile of the movement. How did the movement emerge? What kinds of mobilisations took place?

2. the effects of the movement. What did it achieve? What changes were brought about?

3. the relationship between urban movements and what Castells calls the basic dimensions of social change: class, power and culture.

4. the Madrid Citizen's Movement as an exemplary urban social movement.

For Castells, the Madrid Citizen's Movement, which emerged in 1969 following strong state repression from the crumbling Franco regime,[56] and flourished during the 1970's, represents a paradoxical political phenomenon. For in this highly restrictive political climate, a Citizen's movement emerged with the aim of transforming all matters of everyday life, from the provision of public housing and water supplies, to the demand for open spaces and the organisation of popular celebrations. The reasons underlying the emergence of such a movement are to be found in the nature of the "urban crises" which for Castells are measured by the degree to which the basic goals of an urban system cannot be realised by a dominant set of social interests.[57] The urban crises in Madrid expressed the latent tensions between the urban system and the dominant social interests. The crucial factor which enabled the reproduction of the system was the authoritarian state. Safe in the knowledge that the state would protect their interests, industrial capitalists began to shape society along their own lines.[58]

The provision of housing clearly shows, according to Castells, the impact of this dual logic. Pressure by internal dissent in 1956 and 1957 resulted in the state conceding a low cost housing project so as to pacify the masses and opposition groups. Yet the low cost housing project served to line the pockets of capitalist interests. Houses were badly constructed and few amenities were provided. Madrid's housing project became a major instrument of capital accumulation.[59] This dominant logic was repeated when capitalists and speculators turned

their eyes to the urban squatter settlements and to the inner city tenements. Urban renewal became a chief feature of urban life as land values were increased by the occupation of squatters.[60] Along with this dominant logic, much of Madrid's historical and cultural heritage was jeopardised. It was against this dominant logic - the city as an "exchange value", dominated by the repressive state and the city as a site for the new mass culture of the bourgeoisie - that the Madrid movement emerged and flourished in the late 1960s and 1970s.[61]

The neighbourhood organisations mobilised against this dominant logic. Firstly, they demanded the provision of the means of collective consumption. Secondly, they pressed for the preservation of historical and social life (the restoration of historic buildings, the revocation of traditional celebrations, and so on), and lastly, they demanded participatory, grassroots democracy.[62] This is not to say that for Castells the Movement was shaped solely by the dominant historical logics. On the contrary, it was the Movement's particular consciousness of itself, along with its organisational capacity, which allowed it to interpret social reality and act upon that reality.[63]

The most important aspect of the Madrid Movement, according to Castells, was its "territoriality",[64] the fact that each neighbourhood mobilised around a specific social base and social leadership. Although the different mobilisations tended to concentrate on one central issue, a working class grouping aiming to obtain urban services for example, this did not translate into a sectarian movement. The physical fragmentation gave the movement difference and articulation but did not make it fragmentary. This is clearly exemplified in what Castells describes as the "very, middle, middle class" mobilisation of the so-called Colonias de Hotelitos,[65] where the mobilisation centred on an environmental issue and the sustenance of typically middle class values such as the demands for better living conditions, more open space and the preservation of urban culture. And yet, the Citizen Movement gave huge support to the Colonias eventually bringing about the curtailment of the proposed redevelopment programme.[66] This mobilisation points to two other crucial factors. Although the movement began in response to

one specific issue, in this case an economic one, the area, once mobilised, became integrated into the new vibrancy of Madrid's city life. Furthermore, the Colonias became part of a political struggle as they attempted to wrest control of their lives from the hands of state bureaucrats and technocrats. In short, along with all the other mobilisations, the Colonias fought for self determination through the demand for grassroots democracy.[67] These generalizations are also true for other detailed case studies Castells presents. The various mobilisations emerged around a simple, usually defensive, issue and then incorporated other dimensions as they became more proactive.

What of the impact of the Citizen Movement? Were the goals realized? Was the city changed in any meaningful way? Castells argues that the Citizen Movement produced new effects on at least four levels. In the first place, it produced new effects on urban space, the provision of urban services and urban development.[68] Houses were built, slums and inner city areas were rehabilitated and urban services were provided. Moreover, urban planning was democratised and decentralised. This resulted in an important shift in the dominant goals of urban development and official urban policy, that is, the policies of the authoritarian state and the path of development followed by the interests of industrial capital. Another striking element of the city movement was the revitalisation of urban culture. According to Castells, street fairs, popular festivals and historical traditions were reactivated and reintroduced. Finally, the cultural revival led to the fostering of local community and civic participation through social activities such as public talks, the introduction of Sunday markets and so on.[69] The political effect of the Movement centred on the emergence of a democratic parliament. Because the very existence of the urban movement depended to some extent on the enforcement of civil liberties and rights, the Citizen's Movement found itself playing a major role in the mobilization for democracy.[70] Once this had been achieved the Movement focused its attention on the attainment of democratic local elections.

In general terms, the most important impact of the Madrid Movement concerned what Castells calls the "social concept" of the city. This refers to the way in which the citizens of Madrid transformed their understanding and conceptualization of the city. The dominant interests presented the city as an instrument of power (the bureaucracy, the state), a mechanism of profit (capitalists) and a necessary will for survival (labour market city). The Citizen Movement, by contrast, offered an alternative vision: the city as a use value. A city in which the citizenry could live independently of and in opposition to the values of the dominant interests.[71]

It is now possible to address two crucial questions regarding the Madrid Movement. What was its relationship with the basic dimensions of social change in contemporary societies? Why call the Madrid Movement an urban social movement? Castells relates the Citizen Movement to three key concepts informing his understanding of modern social formations: class, culture and power. While Castells accepts the category of social class as a fundamental construct for an analysis of society, the Madrid experience cannot, he believes, be reduced to this dynamic. Firstly, class positions and struggle relate to the process of **production** whereas the struggles relating to the city focus on the **consumption** dimension. Secondly, Castells argues that an essential prerequisite for class struggles is a concept of "class consciousness". In this sense, urban struggles are not class struggles.[72] Castells is not suggesting that urban movements have got nothing to do with class struggles. Instead, he asserts it is not possible to allow a concept of class to subsume the specificity of the urban. In the conflict about the structuration of society, urban struggles and class struggles are complementary forms. As Castells puts it: "The movement was then a non-class, social movement challenging the structure of a class society."[73]

Similarly, Castells argues that urban social movements cannot be reduced to struggles for cultural expression. Although historically urban social movements have always contained a strong cultural component - the presence of feminist demands, for example - they are not the exclusive domain of such cultural mobilisations and demands. The

cultural innovations which were a central part of the Madrid Movement, were clearly urban based. For example, they centred on the rehabilitation of historical buildings and the introduction of historical celebrations.[74] The relationship between the Citizen movement and the power relations of Spanish society is similarly ambiguous. While the movement was openly a political one, that is, it sought to control and to participate in the state's institutions, this relationship was only successful when the issues were relevant to the neighbourhoods' interests. Once autonomy was sacrificed for a general political objective (directed, for example, by a particular political party), the movement became separated from its power base and eventually disintegrated.[75]

Why, then, was the Madrid movement an urban social movement? According to Castells, it is impossible to reduce the movement to the other dynamics of social change, whether this be cultural, economic or political. The movement emerged in response to the structural features of the urban crisis and demanded three changes. It sought a new city based on use value as opposed to exchange value, a new community focused on a revitalised urban culture, and new power structures amenable to all the people. However, Castells does not assume that this historical and structural context **determines** whether or not a movement emerges. Two important subjective elements were necessary for the urban social movement to have taken root. Firstly, the movement had to be **conscious** of itself as a movement and, secondly, it needed the **organisational means** with which to relate to society as a whole.[76] Castells identifies three kinds of organizational forms which allowed the Movement to flourish:

1. the media which allowed the movement to communicate with different sectors of public opinion in society at large;

2. the "professionals", who were able to interpret the existing society and provide an alternative vision of the social. Here Castells refers to students or radicalised planners who articulated the movements goals;

3. the left wing political parties which were able to elaborate the

demands of the urban movement, as long as they did not absorb the urban protest into the party's political interests.[77]

Given this, Castells offers the following proposition summing up the Madrid social movement:

> The Citizen Movement in Madrid constituted an urban social movement characterised by the social change it brought on the city, culture, and state as a result of collective action triggered by urban demands. Social change was achieved through the links in the transformation simultaneously produced on the urban system, the local culture, and the political system. It also had to define its own mobilisations as part of a broader social movement led by citizens, and had to be related to society through several operations, requiring at least the support of the media, professionals and political parties...[At the same time]...the movement had to keep its own organisational autonomy, as well as its capacity to define its own goals.[78]

Castells, as I have suggested, raises the Madrid Citizen Movement to the level of a Weberian ideal type. As a generalisation, he argues that should the necessary criteria be realised, then a neighbourhood mobilisation would produce social change in the city. Moreover, to account for those movements which do not satisfy all the conditions of his ideal model, Castells creates a comprehensive typology of urban movements by correlating their impact with the different structural dimensions of the urban social movement. Thus he argues that a movement with no autonomous consciousness of itself tends toward urban reform and those movements which lack a distinctive political dimension lean towards urban utopia.[79]

Contextualizing and explaining the Madrid Citizen's Movement: the later Castells' urban political theory

Why then has society given rise to the contradictions which make urban social movements possible and why do these movements emerge? What is the overall **significance** of urban social movements and their relationship with social change? Castells needs a theoretical synthesis which can explain the relationship between urban social movements and the wider social system. To do this, Castells provides a theoretical framework aimed at explaining the general nature of urban change, the process of

historical change and the relationship between contemporary society and social change.

To avoid the difficulties of his earlier macro-theoretical models of social change, Castells adopts two strategies. Firstly, though his work is still located within the Marxist tradition, he does not use Marx's writings in a dogmatic fashion. Castells argues that Marxist theory per se cannot explain the nature of urban social movements. This can be traced back to Marx's ambivalent and contradictory logics of social change, one grounded on the necessary, structural logic of historical change (the inevitable contradiction between the relations and forces of production), and the other concerned with the process of class struggle. Moreover, Castells claims that even in the tradition of Marxism which gives primacy to the class struggle, there is no place for the analysis of social movements. This is the case despite the the fact these forms have played, and continue to play, important historical roles.[80] To counteract these failings, Castells incorporates a broad range of social theories in his attempt to explain social and historical change. Secondly, Castells corroborates his theoretical claims with detailed empirical investigations. Thus the case studies actively contribute to his theory of society rather than simply verifying his meta-theoretical claims.

Before outlining Castells' theory of urban social change, it is important to make some conceptual definitions. In The City and the Grassroots, Castells presents cities as essentially historical products. Moreover, cities are not simply physical or spatial objects, but also cultural and organisational forms which shape people's lives.[81] The basic dimension of urban change is the **struggle** between social classes and historical actors over the **meaning** of the urban in relation to the social structure.[82] According to Castells, urban meaning is not cultural in a narrow or idealist sense. Rather, urban meaning is cultural in a "historico-anthropological" terms for it is the expression of a social structure which includes economic, religious, political and technological operations. In other words, it represents the way people experience their lives in a given set of social conditions.[83]

Where does this urban meaning come from? How is it constructed? This brings us to Castells' theory of social and historical change which is designed to show how dominant urban meanings have emerged through time. This is not an all-encompassing "grand theory" of social transformation, but rather an analytical framework based on research and the critique of previous theoretical traditions. It is an heuristic device designed to facilitate the production of knowledge, not the establishment of truth as such.[84] Castells asserts that reality is shaped by three relationships: production, experience and power.[85] Production is the action of mankind on nature to produce a particular product. Experience refers to the cultural and biological dynamics which shape social relations. Power relations between subjects are the resultant of historically specific production and experience processes. In known societies, these relationships are articulated in specific ways. Production is organised around class relationships, experience is structured primarily by sexual/gender relationships and power is founded on the state.[86]

How are these relationships articulated in space and time? With regard to the process of production, Castells sketches out two social ensembles: the **mode of production** and the **mode of development**. Following Marxist theory, a mode of production refers to the manner through which non-producers appropriate economic surpluses. Each mode of production, and Castells concentrate on the capitalist and "statist" modes, emerges out of a successful hegemonic project carried out by a particular social class.[87] A mode of development refers to the way in which form, matter and energy are combined in work to obtain a product. Castells specifies two modes of development: the industrial and the informational. This concept attempts explain how the surplus value derived from the exploitation of one class by another is increased. In the industrial mode of development productivity results from an increase in the quantity of labour, matter and energy, or from all three elements. In the informational mode of production, by contrast, productivity is increased through improved knowledge and organisational methods.[88]

The most obvious manifestation of Castells' category of experience concerns the domination of men over women. Hence the emergence of feminist movements to counteract and resist male domination and the powerful presence of women in urban movements. More generally, the category of experience in Castells' schema signifies an important historical tendency pertaining to a questioning of the hierarchical relationship between power, production and experience/culture.[89] In the urban context, for example, there is an emphasis on quality of experience and use value against the dominant logics of commodification and exchange. The category of power in Castells' approach designates the "nation-state" and its relationship to society. Power relations centre on the particular connection between state and society, as well as conflicts between states and relations of dependency between types of states such as that between First and Third World states in the present world order. Castells speaks of history producing the nation-state and the "state-nation". The latter is a state that incorporates several cultural groups. In this sense, there emerges the problem of ethnic and racial divisions within particular social formations.[90]

These general logics of historical change inform his account of spatial transformations in advanced capitalist societies. Castells suggests a dramatic restructuring in the production of urban meaning in late capitalist societies. He argues that the reproduction and expansion of the capitalist mode of production, alongside the emergence of the industrial mode of development, has produced a crisis of the urban. The concentration of the means of production and consumption in giant metropoles, the specialisation of spatial location in line with the interest of capital, the commodification of the city itself, and the constant need to "de-" and "re-" urbanise the workforce, has resulted in a deepening crisis in the basic conditions of urban existence, and a politicization of all facets of urban life.[91]

In response to the growing crisis of the urban, the dominant classes, according to Castells, have responded by creating a new set of conditions for the regulation of capitalist social relations. In particular, he argues, this has involved massive technological

innovation in the spheres of production and consumption. As he shows in The Informational City, this new system of production has involved the revolutionary deployment of new communications and micro-electronics systems to improve control over labour forces and to increase the production of surpluses.[92] This has resulted in the emergence of the informational mode of development, which has created new conditions for capital accumulation through a major restructuring of spatial forms. The impact of this new mode of development has been the transformation of places into flows and channels, and the delocalization of production and consumption logics. However, this tendency towards the despatialisation of social processes has certain limits which reflect the tension between the previous industrial and the emergent informational mode of development.[93] For Castells this contradiction at the heart of the new dominant urban meaning results in the separation of people and previously sedimented spatial forms. As he puts it, "the new urban meaning of the dominant class is the absence of any meaning based on experience...The new tendential urban meaning is the spatial separation of people from their product and from their history."[94]

Castells argues that these dominant logics are being challenged by newly emerging social actors who propose alternative urban meanings.[95] He indicates six axes of contestation which condense the broader historical logics he has outlined in relation to the city: increased despatialisation is resisted by those neighbourhoods and regional cultures which have been uprooted or threatened; the disruptive effects of international capital are opposed by those forced into the cities through increased rural-urban migration; the monopolization of knowledge and communications systems is met by attempts to construct alternative, locally-based communication networks; the commodification of the city is resisted by citizen's movements who demand the democratic provision of collective goods and services; the exploitation of ethnic and racial divisions is challenged by the articulation of ethnic identities and alternative cultural discourses; the condensation of power in increasingly authoritarian state institutions leads to the emergence of new social movements and an attempted expansion of the space of civil society.[96]

It is this social context which has given rise to the urban social movements actively challenging the new meanings of contemporary society. What then is the relationship between the general historical logics and the new articulation of space and time, on the one hand, and contemporary urban social movements on the other? It will be recalled that cities, according to Castells, are the unfinished products of political struggle about the meaning, form and function of the urban.[97] Moreover, his hypotheses about urban social movements, confirmed by the Madrid Movement, suggested that urban social movements are structured around three basic goals:

1. to obtain a city which is not the expression of the dominant logic of capital (the city as a commodity), but a use value benefiting all its citizens. This Castells calls **collective consumption trade unionism**;

2. the search for an autonomous cultural identity based on the heritage and history of the city. Castells calls this objective a desire for **community**;

3. the search for democratic local government in opposition to the dominant notion of a centralized state. Castells calls this struggle for a free city a **citizen movement.**[98]

Why should urban social movements be structured by the demand for the city as a use value, as a cultural community and as a sphere of autonomous power? This is explained because urban social movements challenge the three central dynamics which for Castells shape society. They oppose the dominant logics of production, experience and power. That is, they contradict the city as an exchange value for capitalists; the one way flow of "mass culture" and information perpetuated by the new technocracy and the view that the city is simply an instrument of centralized, authoritarian states.[99]

The conditions under which urban antagonisms become urban social movements for Castells, that is, when urban movements consciously articulate demands for collective urban services, political control over the city and the transformation of urban experience, reflect the fact that urban social movements express opposition to the dominant

historical logics of our time. This does not mean, however, that they are the new global agents of transformation. On the contrary, Castells argues that these movements are essentially reactive and defensive forces which emerge because of the historical failure of previously universal political forces such as the working class or mass political parties.[100] Given the historic failures of these movements, Castells argues that urban struggles represent a retreat to more localised political spaces. As he puts it:

> [F]aced with an overpowered labour movement, an omnipresent one-way communication system indifferent to cultural identities, an all-powerful centralized state governed by unreliable political parties, a structural economic crisis, cultural uncertainty, and the likelihood of nuclear war, people go home. Most withdraw individually, but the crucial, active minority, anxious to retaliate, organize themselves on their local turf.[101]

At best, therefore, they can only bring about changes in urban meaning.

Conclusions

By way of conclusion, I shall summarise the central theses of Castells' later theory of urban politics by contrasting the major claims of his new approach with his earlier paradigms. I will begin with the philosophical dimensions before considering the meta-substantive and substantive aspects of his work.

Philosophical dimensions

On an **epistemological** plane, Castells rejects Althusser's rigid distinction between science and ideology. The theory and production of knowledge is integrally connected with historical reality and is based on conceptual adequacy rather than internal coherence. Knowledge is valid when it is empirically verifiable and when it is flexible enough to generate new knowledge about reality. This has important **methodological** connotations. Castells' later approach is more historically and empirically based. It consists of establishing preliminary hypotheses about reality so as to select potentially useful areas of study as well as being able to provide some conceptual tools with which to work reality into theoretical concepts. These theoretical

concepts are sharpened after a detailed analysis of historically significant case studies and through a critical reading of previously constituted traditions of analysis. In this sense there is a mediation between the theoretical and empirical levels of his work.

Meta-substantive aspects

On a meta-substantive level, Castells draws on a variety of intellectual traditions in order to provide an adequate conceptualization of urban social change. For example, his theory of history distills three central schools of thought: Marxism and its theory of material production and reproduction, Weberian sociology, with its distinctive analysis of state and power relations in capitalist societies, and, lastly, the work of Freud and the psychoanalytical tradition from which he draws his analysis of sexuality and gender relations, and which have important implications for Castells' understanding of human experience and culture. With regard to the theorization of social movements in industrial societies Castells draws heavily on the distinctive writings of Alain Touraine. Hence his later theory of social change rejects explanations based solely in terms of class and social structure, or the class struggle as the only determinant of political change, and constitutes a sharp break with his previously elaborated Althusserian problematic. A dogmatic commitment to Marxist theory, he argues, leaves little room for the autonomous role of the state, gender relationships, ethnic and national mobilisations, and, in particular, movements that explicitly define themselves as urban or citizen based. By contrast, Castells' later approach assumes that there are no underlying "givens" which determine social phenomena transhistorically. All concepts are historically and contextually specific and should be used as starting points for the analysis of social phenomena and not as self-enclosed determinants of research.[102]

Another meta-substantive issue which Castells addresses is the relationship between **structure** and **agency**. This difficulty, he argues, has proved to be one of the most intractable problems for Marxist theory and, more particularly, Marxist structuralism. Recognising the dilemma

posed by his early and "transitional" approaches, he argues that Marxist theory has no clear cut solution to the problem. As he puts it: "According to Marxism, through class formation and class consciousness: a 'class in itself' becomes a 'class for itself'. But how does this occur? Marx has no answer."[103] In Castells' estimation, the solution lies in an an explicit endorsement of the role of human agency and consciousness in shaping history, and the rejection of the primacy of productive forces in determining the course of history.[104] As he argues, the historical context which shapes human subjects is itself the "product of the human brain", and, in the second place, historical actors are not the "bearers of structures", but actively shape the social context which is transmitted to them.[105] As he argues with regard to the role of agency in the construction of history:

> But who are these actors? Are we not re-entering a structuralist paradigm, deprived of social actors and worked out by the contradictions. Certainly not. The actors of the urban movements are the urban movements themselves since we have defined movements by the goals they set up for themselves.[106]

Thus Castells gives priority to the class struggle tradition of Marxist theory, though he does not accept that class forces are the only and most important social agents. It is this sense that he uses the concept of praxis as it is expounded in Marx's Theses on Feuerbach, and the cryptic assertion he makes in the Eighteenth Brumaire: "Men make their own history but they do not make it as they choose."[107] In other words, Castells attempts to account for the way in which human action is shaped by a given historical ensemble, though not completely determined by it.

Substantive questions

At a more concrete level of analysis, the categories of **state, power** and **social class** are also significantly transformed in Castells' later writings. In contrast to the theoretical framework set out in The Urban Question, in The City and the Grassroots these concepts are not determined by the structural laws of the social system. The state is conceived as an autonomous historical entity, or set of institutions, with its own set of social actors, its own interests and own sphere of influence. This Weberian conception of the state and bureaucracy,

emphasises the fact that particular institutions have an internal logic of their own, and cannot be reduced to other levels of the social. Moreover, states are depicted as historically contingent constructs whose nature can only be determined in relation to particular forms of class power, nationalism, culture, economic interests, and so forth. Similarly, the role and power of social classes is not determined purely by structural conditions and logics. Although they are located in a particular ensemble of productive relations, classes become political when they are aware of being a class force. Hence the consciousness and experience of social actors are crucial for class struggle to materialise. Furthermore, according to Castells, class divisions and struggles are by no means the only divisions and forms of conflict in society. Urban social movements, for example, while challenging a society divided by class is not a class struggle per se.

Castells' also presents a radically changed theory of the urban in his later writings. Whereas Castells' earlier positions emphasised the objective structural nature of urban space as the key factor in urban political analysis, in The City and the Grassroots, cities are conceptualized as living systems produced over time by people. In this sense, they are historical artefacts which arise and are defined by the conflict between social actors with opposing visions of urban meaning, form and function. Thus, for instance, Castells cites the example of the city becoming a free space for common trade in medieval times, thereby representing a victory for merchant interests against the feudal order.[108] As he argues:

> the definition of the meaning of "urban" is not the spatialised xerox copy of a culture, nor the consequence of a social battle between undetermined historical actors in some intergallactic vacuum. It is one of the fundamental processes through which historical actors (social classes, for instance) have structured society according to their interests and values.[109]

These shifts are replicated in Castells' changing approach to urban social movements. Whereas in The Urban Question, urban social movements are accounted for in structural terms, in The City and the Grassroots urban social movements are those forces which oppose and transform the

institutionalised meaning, form and function of the city. To achieve
this, urban social movements must articulate the three structural goals
of collective consumption, community culture and political self-
management, they must be conscious of their role as agents of urban
change, they must be connected and organised by "social organisers" and,
they should be autonomous of other political forces and parties.

Not surprisingly, there are important variations in the
interpretations of urban social movements which are provided in the
different phases of his writing. In The Urban Question, urban social
movements only become politically significant when they are articulated
with the revolutionary working class and aimed at the destruction of the
capitalist state. In certain conjunctures these forces may assume a
highly significant political position. In City, Class and Power, urban
social movements are politically relevant when they are in alliance with
other anti-capitalist forces in a democratic struggle for socialism at a
local and national level. In The City and the Grassroots, urban social
movements have a more ambivalent relationship with processes of social
and political change. While they are agents of social change in their
own right and thus not reducible to other sources of change (working
class struggles, for example), they are not able to transform society as
a whole. This is because they are principally **reactive** and **defensive**
social movements which provide an alternative way of life within the
confines of cities. Thus to the extent that they are successful they are
only able to transform **urban** meaning, form and function.

In these concluding remarks I have attempted to summarise the major
themes which have been presented in my genealogy of Castells' different
problematizations of urban politics. So far, I have attempted to
reconstruct the main arguments and the relevant contexts against which
this corpus of work can be understood. In the next two parts of this
dissertation, I will pursue a different strategy. Here my approach will
become more critical as I attempt to evaluate the different
philosophical and substantive arguments which Castells has put forward,
as well as presenting arguments which can perhaps deepen and possibly
extend his approach to urban political analysis. To do this, I shall

begin with a critical reading of the early Castells and, in particular, with an assessment of the Althusserian problematic which in no small measure gave rise to Castells' entire enterprise.

Part Two

A Critical Reading of Castells' Earlier Problematics:
The Urban Question and City, Class and Power

Chapter 4

The Early Castells and Althusser: Philosophical and Substantive Questions

My genealogy of Castells' successive efforts to construct a theory of urban politics suggests an organic unity between the philosophical assumptions, the "meta-substantive" and the more concrete levels of his investigations. Depending on whether one begins with Castells' most concrete theses – urban planning, for example – or whether one starts with the most abstract presuppositions – dialectical materialism, for example – one has to refer elsewhere in the logical sequence to different theoretical conditions of possibility in order to understand the ordering of his categories. In The Urban Question, for example, an understanding of urban planning depends on his conceptualization of the urban system. And, making sense of the urban system, entails a definition of the urban which presupposes a theory of different modes of production and their articulation in particular social formations. All this presupposes a general conception of society – the theory of historical materialism – which is grounded on the philosophical system of dialectical materialism. To move from the most abstract to the concrete would entail a similar process of theoretical construction.

To evaluate Castells' urban political theory requires, therefore, an enquiry into the interrelations between these different levels of analysis. This will be reflected in the three part division of my arguments. Firstly, I will concentrate on the philosophical assumptions underpinning Castells' work. Secondly, I will examine the meta-substantive propositions which structure Castells' theses. Thirdly, I will examine the concrete articulation of these propositions by evaluating his theorization of urban social movements. This chapter will consider the problems raised by the first two questions and the next chapter will consider those posed by the third. To achieve this, I shall provide a close reading of Althusser's influence on Castells' work in

this chapter, followed by an analysis of the early Castells' theory of urban social movements in the next.

While my approach to Castells' texts in these two chapters is primarily critical, this does not mean that the earlier writings are simply a foil with no intrinsic significance. It is necessary to "go through" the earlier texts in order to properly evaluate the later writings. This is so for two main reasons. Firstly, such a reading serves the propaedeutic function of isolating the questions which are important for an adequate theorization of urban politics. Secondly, there are a number of important concepts and logics which can be salvaged from his earlier writings and which can be used in the elaboration of a viable research programme. While this reading has posited something of a discontinuity between the "two Castells", it is important to stress certain continuities as well. Neither a simple continuity nor an equally problematic discontinuity will prove satisfactory in this regard.

My evaluation of Castells' early texts will advance the following five propositions:

Firstly, Castells theory of urban politics, particularly his conception of urban social movements, is grounded on an objectivist account of the urban. This is reflected in Castells' effort to delimit an authentic real and theoretical object; and is a consequence of Castells' idiosyncratic interpretation of Althusser along with certain philosophical assumptions deeply embedded in Althusser's text itself.

Secondly, apart from this purely philosophical foundationalism, his objectivism has important substantive effects. In particular, Castells' heavy reliance on Althusser and Poulantzas' reformulation of historical materialism results in a number of essentialist claims. These include a regional conception of social formations in which there is an a priori separation between different levels of the social; a hidden economic determinism; a structural determinism, partly the product of economic determinism, which clouds Castells' understanding of political practices, political subjectivity and the historicity of social processes; and a commitment to societal objectivism in which the pre-

given object of society is posited in an unproblematic fashion. All of these suppose that a society has a precise, rationally determinable, system of social relations which are fully present and self-sustained.

Thirdly, this "substantive objectivism" has important effects on Castells' early account of urban social movements. Remaining within the ambit of structural determinism, his understanding of the emergence of urban social movements tends to focus on economic contradictions and the "knee-jerk" reactions of the state. Urban social movements are reduced to the structurally determined contradictions within the urban system, and between the urban system and the wider social structure.

Fourthly, as a result of Castells' economism and structuralism, there is a systematic devaluation of the role of politics and ideology in the explanation of urban social movements. I argue that without a sophisticated conception of the political - the constitution of political subjectivity, the articulation of different struggles, a conceptualisation of political antagonisms - it becomes very difficult to account for the **political character** of urban social movements. It also prevents an understanding of the significance of urban social movements in the contemporary political situation which requires a historical and political awareness of social phenomena wholly missing from structuralist accounts. Moreover, Castells' evaluation of urban social movements is hampered by the societal objectivism I touched on earlier. It is not particularly helpful to measure the significance of urban social movements against the backdrop of a unified social formation, because they are unlikely to register at this level, and their inherent importance tends to be downplayed.

Lastly, all these factors, particularly the devaluation of politics, restrict the strategic opportunities that urban social movements make available for broader political projects. This is manifest in the early Castells' strategic recommendations in which urban social movements are viewed in purely instrumental terms. More precisely, and couched in Leninist language, their strategic significance is dependent on whether or not they are able to assist in the smashing of the capitalist state.

I will now attempt to explicate these themes with a close reading of Castells' earlier writings in relation to the Althusserian paradigm. I shall begin with the philosophical assumptions and procedures.

Philosophical questions

A major concern of all Castells' theoretical interventions into the field of urban political analysis has centred on the epistemological procedures and methodological consequences of his work. Influenced as it was, at least in its initial formulation, by Althusser's epistemological critique of Marxist humanism and all forms of empiricism, Castells' earlier construction of a valid real and theoretical object of investigation was based on this epistemological challenge to earlier theoretical paradigms. And, moving beyond Althusser's philosophical objectives, Castells was always involved at each stage in his theoretical development in the empirical investigation of social and political processes, so that his project necessitated the deployment and modification of his theoretical constructs at more concrete levels of investigation. This interconnectedness of empirical and theoretical research is most clearly articulated in The City and the Grassroots.

The essential starting point in Castells' reformulation of the urban sociológical tradition was his delimitation of the "urban". His critical reading of other theories of the urban forced him to conclude that without coherent objects of investigation it would have been impossible to derive a theory of urban politics. The production of his two objects of analysis were of course highly controversial aspects of his early enterprise. By setting a rigid demarcation of his field of study, and stringently pursuing the logics implied by his conceptual specification, Castells simultaneously introduced an unprecedented rigour and interest in the field of urban sociology, but also exposed himself, precisely on this level, to widespread and detailed criticism. In some ways it was unfortunate that most of the early criticism focused so strongly on his novel definition of the "urban", for though it was a key factor in Castells project, many of his insights into urban politics are gained despite his philosophical assumptions and procedures rather than because

of them. Nevertheless, in order to assess the early work one has to examine Castells' construction of his objects of investigation, as well as the implications which flow from this "constitution", for this initial founding moment strongly influences the entire system of categories which are outlined in The Urban Question.

Castells' arguments in The Urban Question suggest two central objects of investigation: an authentic real object pertaining to spatial units of collective consumption, and a corresponding theoretical object of investigation centred on the urban system. The production of these two objects allows Castells to formulate the various aspects and problems associated with the question of urban politics. Moreover, his theorization of urban social movements hinges on the validity of these definitions and their conceptual specification in relation to the wider social system. In order to examine the usefulness of these conceptual intuitions, it is necessary to bracket for a moment the substantive elements which are used to outline these objects, and to consider the central philosophical source upon which Castells' drew to justify his procedures: Althusser's reading of the materialist dialectic. This conceptual detour is necessary for an evaluation of Castells' substantive project and for my attempt to outline a different approach to urban political phenomena.

Althusser and the materialist dialectic

In the first instance, Althusser's intellectual project was concerned with epistemological issues. He was occupied with several problems traditionally associated with the philosophy of science: how can we account for the historical production and accumulation of scientific knowledge? What are the conditions that have to be satisfied for the constitution of knowledge? In other words, how can one describe the unity and character of scientific frameworks and how is it possible to describe the movements and historical relations between scientific concepts or schema?[1] At a more concrete level, Althusser's intervention was directed at the Marxist tradition and the status of Marx's Capital in Western philosophy.[2] Here Althusser inquired into the scientificity

of Marx's problematic with regard to the historical tradition of which it forms a part, but which Althusser argues it decisively broke.[3]

In outlining his conception of knowledge, Althusser has two targets - **idealism** and **empiricism** - both of which may be subsumed under a general notion of essentialism.[4] For presentational purposes I will outline Althusser's criticicism of idealism in connection with his elaboration of a **symptomatic reading** of philosophy. I shall examine his opposition to empiricism alongside his attempt to distuinguish the **real object** from the **theoretical object** of analysis.[5] Both articulations of these concepts entail the category of the **problematic** and both pressupose an **epistemological rupture** in Marx's work between the "young" and "later" Marx.[6]

In his attack on idealism, Althusser contrasts the "young" and "later" Marx's reading of the German idealist tradition.[7] Marx's earlier writings, according to Althusser, are imprisoned in a Hegelian reading of the world even though this is sometimes presented in Feuerbachian language.[8] This Hegelian mode of reading presupposes the essence of knowledge in the concrete existence of the world. This "reading" is "innocent", because it has a rational structure - for Hegel the "cunning of reason" - which is unproblematically captured by the mind, and embodied in Absolute Knowledge.[9] There is thus a transparent complicity between Reason (the voice of the logos) and Being.[10] The "young Marx" remains, for Althusser, imprisoned in this ideological problematic, in which the reading of reality is premised on the immediacy of the truth.[11] As he puts it, the Marx of the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, "read the human essence at sight, immediately, in the transparency of its alienation."[12] In this sense, Marx's opposition to capitalist alienation, manifested in forms such as property, the state, money and so on, pressuposed the idea of a pre-given, natural "human essence". This conception of human subjectivity, stretching back at least to the Enlightenment, embracing the philosophies of Rousseau, Kant, Hegel and, in its most radical form, Feuerbach and the Left Hegelians, came to be negated, in the Hegelian sense, by something external to it, though it was dialectically reconcileable through the

moment of "objectification". This moment of objectification, for Marx, would be the creation of communist society and with it the unconcealment of man's species being.[13]

Thus the "young Marx", in Althusser's reading, remains trapped in an ideological problematic. And it is this structure of "knowledge" production which underpins the substantive content of Marx's earlier propositions. But these paradigmatic assumptions were decisively undermined in Marx's later writings where he was able to articulate what Althusser calls, drawing on Lacan, a symptomatic reading of the text.[14] This symptomatic reading was directed at those texts which Marx regarded as crucial for the understanding of social formations in general and political economy in particular. Althusser divides this new conception of reading into two related dimensions. A "visionary reading", in which Marx reads with a view to isolating the presences and absences within a given text,[15] and a symptomatic reading in which Marx addresses a lack in the first type of reading, namely, the failure to account for the **combination** of presences and absences isolated in the first reading. This lack in a visionary reading, according to Althusser, lies in the paradox that a fissure in the text is only visible in that it is invisible. In other words, the paradox can only be grappled with by showing a connection between a visible and an invisible field, and then by theorising a necessary link between the present text and its constitutive other.[16] Althusser is thus attempting to re-think the idea of reading by including both a visionary and a "non-visionary" dimension.[17] He thus opposes the idea of a single, fully-constituted text, and presupposes the presence of other texts, even though the presences of these other texts take the form of certain slips and absences in the immediate text. By concentrating attention on these fissures, Marx was able, according to Althusser's interpretation, to produce a new text. This was achieved by the constitution of a new object of analysis necessarily omitted by the original text's theoretical horizon.[18]

For a symptomatic reading to be possible, Marx requires an **informed vision**, that is, a vision capable of producing a second text,

necessarily excluded by the original text. This requires a field of investigation which can produce the absences in the first text. To understand this more clearly, it is necessary to introduce Althusser's notion of the problematic.[19] This concept was developed by Althusser to grapple with the thorny question of the "early" and "later" Marx. As opposed to those who argue for a basic continuity in Marx's writings, Althusser has suggested a radical discontinuity between what he saw were two irreconcilable systems of discourse.[20] To account for the unity of the two discourses, as well as the transition from an ideological terrain to a scientific one, Althusser posits his notion of the problematic. He asserts that every system of ideas, including an ideological system, presupposes a terrain of investigation structured around a determinate set of questions. These questions are focused on an object of investigation which is produced by the theoretical field itself. Thus the vision of new problems, and potential solutions, which arise in a given theoretical discourse, depend on the problematic which delimits that field of observation.[21] The existence of a problematic restricts the vision of a problem to that which the problematic itself makes visible. It necessarily, therefore, makes certain questions and problems invisible as long as one occupies that theoretical terrain.[22]

To return to Althusser's delineation of the two readings in the "later Marx", it can now be shown how Marx's symptomatic reading, requires the construction of a new problematic which entails a rupture from the previous terrain and the production of a new theoretical horizon. In Marx's case this resulted in the founding of historical materialism or the science of social formations.[23] According to Althusser, this movement cannot be depicted in teleological terms for it marks the shift from an ideological conception of the world to a scientific one. Opposing a Hegelian reading, Althusser argues the following:

> Marx's position and his whole critique of ideology implies...that science (which apprehends reality) constitutes **in its very meaning** a **rupture** with ideology and that it sets itself up in **another terrain**, that it constitutes itself **on the basis of new questions**, that it raises **other questions** about reality than ideology, or what comes to the same thing, it **defines its object** differently from ideology.[24]

How then does Althusser distinguish between science and ideology? What are the necessary conditions for the emergence of a scientific conception of reality? Althusser presents us with a number of different theorizations of ideology, and how they are to be distinguished from science.[25] They all begin, however, from one major assumption, namely, that the "later" Marx constitutes a decisive epistemological break in the history of knowledge production. As well as inaugurating a scientific revolution in philosophy and theory, it also opened the possibility for a radical critique of ideological systems. By reflecting back on this break, Althusser elaborates the conditions marking off science from ideology. Firstly, Althusser suggests that whereas a science is aware of its own conditions of possibility (an awareness of its own problematic), an ideology does not and can not. In this sense, theoretical labour conducted within the horizon of an ideological framework is profoundly unconscious of its own terms of reference. Thus the questions it asks, and the problems it grapples with, remain once and for all trapped in a given ideological space.[26]

Secondly, as a consequence of this "blindness" to its own assumptions, ideology, when taken as a form of knowledge, tends to perform a "practico-social" function (the reproduction of a given social formation), rather than a purely theoretical function. In other words, an ideological system of "knowledge" is not sufficiently detached from the prevalent ideological terrain to be able to account critically for that reality.[27] Hence an ideological frame of reference simply reflects the dominant ideology and deforms "reality" by imposing ideological categories onto the real. Thirdly, ideology mystifies the real questions posed by a given historical epoch by obscuring a critical engagement with reality itself. For Althusser, this is particularly evident in the Idealist, especially Hegelian, accounts of history. Marx had to abandon, therefore, the terrain of idealist philosophy before he could address the social and political problems presented by the emergence of bourgeois society. This required "breaking through" the "enormous layer of ideology beneath which he was born", and the production of a new object of analysis which, unlike the Hegelian problematic, engaged with and corresponded to the real problems of history posed at the time.[28]

All these epistemological arguments point to Althusser's overriding thesis that knowledge is a practice involving the transformation of one corpus of ideas to another.[29] To formalize this movement, Althusser introduces different levels of the knowledge process which he calls Generalities. Employing Marx's methodological remarks in the 1859 Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy, Althusser argues that the production of concrete knowledge involves the movement from Generalities 1 to Generalities 3, through the intervention of Generalities 2.[30] Generalities 1 constitute the raw material of knowledge production (either ideological concepts, scientific 'facts', or already elaborated scientific concepts belonging to an earlier phase of a science). Generalities 3 are the new scientific concepts or "facts", which are produced by Generalities 2. Generalities 2 are the corpus of concepts which constitute the theory of a particular science. Thus Generalities 2 defines the field in which all the problems of a given science must necessarily be posed.[31] The production of Generalities 2 entails the same logic. Scientific concepts of a given theory result from the transformation of an ideological system into a scientific one. Althusser can thus account for the "founding" of a new scientific problematic by showing how a critique of previously constituted ideological facts (Generalities 1), and the production of new scientific facts (Generalities 3), simultaneously entails the elaboration of a new theory (Generalities 2). This is because the constitution of new "facts" presupposes the existence of a different theoretical field in which knowledge is constituted. Moreover, just as the "facts" produced by theoretical practice are internal to the knowledge process itself, so the tensions and anomalies engendered by a theoretical problematic have to be either "repaired" within that theoretical field, or else the theoretical problematic itself needs to be transformed. This would require a displacement of the previous problematic and the elaboration of a new terrain of analysis.[32]

As I have pointed out, Althusser's theory of theoretical production, formalized in his three Generalities, was constructed in opposition to both idealist and empiricist epistemologies. Idealism, most clearly manifested in Hegel's absolute idealism, reduces reality to the self

movement of the Idea. It thereby obliterates any qualitative distinction
between different moments of the knowledge process (Generalities 1 to
Generalities 3) by postulating an identity of essence between the
abstract idea given at the beginning of the knowledge process and the
concrete knowledge, or Absolute Knowledge, emerging at the end. Hegel
therefore effaces any **productive** dimension of knowledge formation by
substituting the real as "the result of self-synthesising, self-
deepening and self-moving thought",[33] that is, Reason as it moves to
self-realisation becomes unified with the real-concrete, in fact **is** the
real itself.[34] As opposed to this self-engendering movement of a simple
interiority, Althusser argues that the movement from the "abstract" to
the "concrete", or the transformation of ideology into scientific
knowledge, entails a discontinuity in both the corpus of concepts making
up a new theory, and in the elaboration of new scientific knowledge as a
result of this epistemological rupture.

But, according to Althusser, equating knowledge with production
resolves only one aspect of the epistemological problem. The correct
relationship between the "abstract" and the "concrete" remains to be
theorised. In addressing this question, Althusser opposes the empiricist
conception of knowledge which he argues simply inverts, without re-
inscribing, the idealist position. Empiricist epistemology presupposes,
firstly, a subject (consciousness) and object of knowledge (reality or
the real-concrete) which are given and thus pre-date the process of
knowledge and, secondly, a process of knowledge production dominated by
the notion of **abstraction.**[35] This operation consists of abstracting a
real essence from the real-concrete. It entails the extraction of the
pure object of knowledge from the impure dimensions of reality. For
Althusser, the empiricist paradigm makes a clear distinction between the
real-concrete and knowledge of the real-concrete. The real-concrete
contains two aspects: the essence, which is the object of knowledge, and
the inessential or that which cannot represent the essence of the real.
Thus it is presupposed from the outset that knowledge already resides
alongside that which is not representable in the real-concrete (an
individual object, the particularity, or that which "escapes" the
reduction to form, its empirical "materiality", for example). The

function of knowledge is to separate these two dimensions of the real-concrete by eliminating the impure aspects of the real-concrete. As Althusser suggests, the empiricist conception of knowledge is simply another variant of a **visionary** reading of the world. The only difference being that the transparency of the real is not conceded from the outset, but is obtained by uncovering the "dross of impurities" residing in the real-concrete.[36] In the empiricist mode, then, knowledge of the real-concrete consists in the separation of the real essence embedded within the real-concrete through a process of purifying the important kernel and eliminating that which is not necessary.[37]

Althusser's critique of this inverted essentialism or idealism focusses on the ambiguous character of the word "real" in the empiricist discourse.[38] Althusser radicalises this ambiguity, by drawing on Marx's distinction between the real object and the object of knowledge. As Althusser points out, the empiricist conception of knowledge admits something of essential importance when it suggests that the object of knowledge is not the same as the real-concrete. In other words, some operation has to be performed before an essence can be extracted. At the same time, however, it effaces this distinction by suggesting that this non-identity can be reduced to the parts of the same object: the real-concrete. And this means that the essence toward which knowledge aims is always already given in existence or the real-concrete.[39]

One principal concern permeates Althusser's critique of the idealist and empiricist modes of knowledge production, namely his desire to rethink the distinction between the concrete and the abstract, or the thought/reality dichotomy. To do so, he draws on Marx's distinction between the real object (the real-concrete or the real totality, which "survives in its independence, after as before, outside the head") and the object of knowledge which, as Althusser puts it, "is a product of the thought which produces it in itself as a thought concrete, as a thought totality."[40] Crucial, therefore, to this distinction is the thesis that the process of knowledge production takes place entirely within the ambit of theoretical practice. Wholly, that is, within thought. Any movement of knowledge, therefore, from the "abstract" to

the "concrete", or, as Althusser might prefer, from ideological "knowledge" to scientific knowledge, takes place **within** a historically constituted system of knowledge production, what Althusser has called an apparatus of thought or problematic.[41]

Althusser therefore distinguishes between the **real-concrete** – that which exists outside of the knowledge process and is not, therefore, reducible to our knowledge of it (though Althusser aims at understanding this reality) – and the **object of knowledge.** The object of knowledge is theoretically constructed within a particular problematic, and knowledge is produced and "verified" around this object. This knowledge is what Althusser calls the **concrete-in-thought.** Similarly, inconsistencies which may arise between the "facts" of a theory and the theory itself are strictly speaking "internal" to the system of knowledge production. They represent a tension between the postulates and results of the problematic.[42] By arguing that this knowledge **of** the real-concrete takes place wholly in thought, that is, in the movement from Generalities 1 to Generalities 3, Althusser can bring out the **constitutive** component of knowledge production.[43] The production of knowledge does not simply reflect or reproduce a pre-existing world of objects and social relations because these objects themselves have to be constructed by theoretical problematics. He is thus able to dispense with an empiricist conception of abstraction which assumes the existence of a world prior to our intervention in it. In contradistinction, therefore, to the idea that "real abstraction" is derived from a pure and unmediated empirical reality, Althusser can argue that the knowledge process always works on a raw material which has itself already been elaborated and transformed by a previous system of knowledge or ideology. The creation of knowledge about the real-concrete does not proceed by a progressive accumulation of facts about an accepted or "always-available" object of investigation, but through the radical constitution of "new" objects of analysis. This involves the displacement of ideological problematics and the elaboration of scientific horizons of analysis.[44]

A critical assessment of Althusser's theory of knowledge production

In the Marxist tradition at least, Althusser's philosophical effort to rethink "dialectical materialism" was crucial in turning around an increasingly idealist and positivist intellectual system. The attempt opened the possibility, however fleeting, of producing a materialist conception of knowledge. In the same gesture, however, this avenue was closed off. In deconstructing Althusser's attempt to ground Marxist epistemology, I will focus on this subtle opening and closing dialectic: the attempted decentring of a metaphysical circle and its immediate reinscription.

By positing a radical dislocation between the real and theoretical objects of knowledge, by outlining the idea of a theoretical problematic, and by stressing the transformative and constitutive role of knowledge production, Althusser goes some way towards dissolving the "subject-object" dichotomy of Western metaphysics. Let us briefly consider the "weakening" of metaphysical discourse brought about by these three theses.

In the first instance, the separation of a real and theoretical object breaks with the giveness and immediacy of the object. Althusser suggests that the process of knowledge production proceeds as a series of ruptural displacements, and not as the teleological accumulation of knowledge about a preconstituted object of knowledge (positivism). Neither does it advance through an unmediated abstraction from the real-concrete (empiricism) and nor as the progressive realisation of a subjective reason (idealism). The concept of a problematic dispenses with the idea of a pre-given subject of knowledge - be it transcendental, scientific or empirical[45] - and concentrates on a historical apparatus of knowledge with specific conditions of existence.[46] Althusser thus dispenses with the constituent subject and places the thinking subject within the context of "a determinate mode of production of knowledges".[47] In this way, the subject, rather than standing as the absolute originator of knowledge, an unproblematic "author", of her own textuality, is simultaneously produced by the

theoretical system within which she finds herself. In this sense, Althusser is suggesting that one is always to some extent condemned to tradition, "thrown", as Heidegger has put it, into a pre-existent system of social relations which in this case are theoretical and intellectual.[48] Althusser's stress on the transformism of theoretical practice both in the production of a new problematic and in the construction of new concrete knowledge about reality undermines, to some extent, epistemologies grounded on a simple correspondence or adequation between knowledge and social reality. If theoretical practice takes place, as Althusser argues, wholly on the plane of thought and involves the transformation of previously "ideological" raw material into "scientific" facts or concepts, then an unproblematic separation of planes between social reality, on the one hand, and knowledge of that reality, on the other, is put into question. Knowledge as transformation of existent theoretical and social discourses precludes an unmediated access to the real, and affirms the interpretative character of discourses on social reality.

Now, as I have suggested, these breakthroughs are immediately effaced at a number of points in Althusser's texts. The closure of Althusser's materialist epistemology is most clearly revealed in an important supplementary thesis which rests uncomfortably with the three aspects of his discourse we have just mentioned. This is the distinction between science and ideology which is central to Althusser's positing of an epistemological rupture between the early and the later Marx, and which serves as a foundation – not properly theorised or elaborated – upon which the entire conceptual edifice is built. In my view, this "unthought" dichotomy between science and ideology reintroduces those very elements of traditional epistemological discourse which Althusser was intent on excluding. Central to Althusser's understanding of the materialist dialectic is the assumption – not properly justified – that the work of the later Marx represents an epistemic rupture from a previously ideological terrain. In so doing, it presents a scientific, that is to say, objective and rational, philosophical mode of investigation and inquiry, producing authentic knowledge of real objects in the world. In For Marx and Reading Capital, for example, Althusser

discusses the historical mode by which Marxism was constituted as a
science (rupture, dislocation and so on) and he discusses, most
unconvincingly, the mechanisms through which Marxist science – its
theory, methods and practices – cognitively appropriates the real
object. But nowhere does he set out the conditions by which Marxism
constitutes a science as such, or for that matter the conditions under
which any theoretical object becomes scientific.[49]

This distinction between science and ideology, therefore, undermines
Althusser's efforts to de-centre the epistemological circle of Western
metaphysics.[50] It also subverts Althusser's efforts to elaborate a
materialist ontology in which the primacy of being over thought
(materialism) replaces that of thought over being (idealism).[51] We need
to consider why this attachment to the scientific nature of historical
materialism blocks the more open-ended elements in his text. By arguing
that historical materialism represents a scientific discourse producing
authentic knowledge of reality, Althusser re-enters the most traditional
of epistemological terrains and obliterates the distance he has posited
between the real and theoretical objects of investigation. The essential
dislocation of these two levels is now reabsorbed and the real is
reduced to the conceptual. If historical materialism somehow guarantees
knowledge of the real, how else can this be interpreted if not as
emblematic of epistemological discourse, and Western metaphysics more
generally?

And once the distance between the real and our knowledge of it has
been thoroughly dissolved, how are we to understand the idea of the
problematic? If Althusser's commitment to Marxist science confers a
rational and conceptual character on the world of objects, then the
problematic must be a "fully-sutured", that is, it must be a
hermetically sealed system of propositions and procedures. This would
erase the idea that the problematic represents a radical discontinuity
in the constitution of systems of knowledge for instead of a
historically contingent event which ruptures sedimented apparatuses of
knowledge, we have a systematic closure of knowledge production.
Similarly, by presenting the problematic as a fully constituted system

of knowledge, he erodes the openness of theoretical concepts and empirical deployments to change and modification. The same is true if we consider the idea of transformation in Althusser's epistemological critique. The idea of transformation, both theoretically and empirically, is central to Althusser's critique of epistemology. Yet by stressing the notion of Marxist science, Althusser arrests the endless process of transformation, and undermines the claim that problematics engender a series of discontinuities in the construction of systems of knowledge. Hence Marxist science allows an unproblematic correlation between knowledge and the world.

"Object problems": Castells' deployment of Althusserian philosophy to theorise the urban

Though Castells' use of Althusserian philosophical concepts is by no means clear-cut, the traces of the Althusserian "revolution" in epistemology dominate The Urban Question. Perhaps the best way to show the effects of this would be to focus on Castells' differences with Althusser. I have already examined Castells' ambiguous notion of a real object. Paradoxically, it was this ambiguous conception of the real object which Althusser criticised in Reading Capital, though as I have argued his "resolution" of the aporia is not decisive. Anti-essentialist readings of Althusser are apt to focus on an ontological distinction between the real and theoretical objects, whereas more realist interpretations are likely to stress a real object external to our discourses and some kind of correspondence between the two levels.[52]

In Castells' efforts to demarcate a "real" object of investigation, it is not clear whether the distinction between the real and theoretical objects is consistently maintained. At certain points in his text, he claims that scientific discourse embodies both the real and theoretical objects. He argues, for example, that a "scientific discipline is built either by a certain conceptual cutting up of reality, i.e. through the definition of a **scientific object**, or by a specific field of observation, i.e. through the choice of a **real object**."[53] In other places, it seems as if the real object is only produced within a

theoretical discourse and has no extra-theoretical conditions of possibility. In the The Urban Question, for example, he argues the following:

> Whatever theoretical perspective one adopts, one will have to accept that all space is constructed and that, consequently, the theoretical non-delimitation of the space being dealt with ... amounts to accepting culturally prescribed (and therefore ideological) segmentation. Since physical space is the deployment of matter as a whole, a study "without a priori" of any sort will amount to establishing a history of matter. By this reductio ad absurdum, I am trying to explode the evidence of this "space" and to recall the following elementary epistemological postulate: the necessary construction, whether theoretical or ideological (when it is "given") of any object of analysis.[54]

Though exegetically interesting, these inconsistencies are not conclusive for in all cases an essentialist, epistemological discourse is retained.[55] As I have argued in my critique of Althusser, the primary claim made by Althusser and Castells centres on the scientific character of the materialist dialectic. And though Castells raises a series of plausible theoretical and empirical difficulties in previous urban sociological paradigms, while also suggesting at times a more pragmatic conception of theory choice,[56] the other approaches are criticised because they are ideological rather than scientific. The main difficulty with this epistemological critique is the uncritical positing of Marxist science as the truth of reality. This position precludes a meaningful engagement with, and possible articulation of, other traditions of analysis which may prove useful in understanding the urban process. As Hindess and Hirst have argued forcefully, the era of normative epistemologies is over. Given this, they problematize the criticism of other theories simply because they do not conform to one's own standard of rationality, supposedly universal and apodicitic, which one regards as "scientific".[57]

In Castells' earlier writings, two different epistemological and methodological positions, both equally essentialist, may be found. There is a strong "realist" position in which Castells assumes that the world is structured in certain ways, and then seeks to uncover the mechanisms which underpin social reality.[58] His critical reading of the

sociological tradition, however, and his construction of an alternative theoretical object of analysis, depends on the formal extension of Marxist categories into the urban sphere. In this regard, his work displays certain "idealist" tendencies. We need to examine these two positions, and their implications, in more detail. Let us begin with the stronger notion of a real object. If it is argued that the real object refers to an identifiable reality independent of Castells' theoretical discourse, one would stress the spatial element in his understanding of the urban. The urban would refer to something in the world from which we could construct theoretical and empirical discourses. More concretely, this would mean that the urban has a particular spatial referent, what we might call more commonsensically the "city" or "urban space", though Castells' would not necessarily restrict himself to these entities. This spatial referent would also produce certain substantive effects, such as determining particular social and political processes. It would be possible to argue, as Castells does in The Urban Question, that the increasing spatial concentration of urban areas generates significant social and political effects. Hence it would be possible to construct a causal relation between space and social processes.

Thus it would be possible to specify spatial units of analysis along with certain social and political attributes about those areas. For methodological purposes, it would be possible to pinpoint a physical site around which research could be arranged. In epistemological terms, it would be possible to specify certain properties about those sites. In other words, these units would be organised around struggles and disputes about the provision of collective consumption, and so forth. Both these implications are inseparable and both seem to be problematic. While it may be a pragmatic decision to demarcate a given entity before undertaking research, this decision is by no means innocent. Certain epistemological criteria are implicitly included in any methodological decision to demarcate research sites. The epistemological problem centres on the attribution of social and political properties to particular spatial units.

What then are the substantive effects of this position? Firstly, space would be granted a privileged role in Castells' analysis of urban politics. If urban areas are spatially determined, social and political factors play at best a secondary role. This would undermine Castells' effort to deconstruct the rigid dichotomy between the spatial and the social. The urban would be determined by a fixed spatial referent in relation to which certain social and political processes would correspond. At an empirical or intuitive level, this might be a plausible conclusion to make, and one might point to the tendential overlapping of spatial and social processes. However, the theoretical consequences of such a position must be noted. Firstly, it would undermine Castells' idea that collective consumption was not simply a spatial category. Secondly, it would weaken Castells' effort to dissolve the relationship between the cultural and the "objectively material". Though Castells aims to establish a relationship between the spatial and the social, he would end up with a further dichotomy. Either the urban refers to the processes of collective consumption in advanced capitalist societies, in which case research would be directed at examining struggles over the provision of these means, or the urban refers to certain spatial features in advanced capitalist societies, in which case research is focused on particular spatial logics and their effects on the social system. In the latter position, space qua space would determine important effects independently of other factors. Moreover space qua space would be marked in particular ways, a unit of collective consumption, for example, and crucial questions would arise. Why is this space related exclusively to this element of the social formation and not others? Where could we empirically locate space exclusively marked by processes of collective consumption? In other words, in this reading space takes on an objective position and necessarily devalues other so-called subjective factors.

This reading of Castells' delimitation of the urban would result in a crude materialist and positivist objectivism. It is possible, however, to outline a more sophisticated reading of Castells' attempt to outline a scientific urban sociology, one which would be closer to Althusser's epistemological practice and which would stress the constructed nature

of the urban in The Urban Question. Here the definition of the urban would emerge out of a theoretical labour which goes hand in hand with the elaboration of his major theoretical category, the urban system. The extension of Marxist and Althusserian categories into the urban domain would then produce a legitimate object of investigation within the context of a new theoretical problematic. In this reading the idea of the urban specifies the **processes** surrounding the reproduction of labour power, and the physical location in which they take place would be secondary to these social and political processes.

The difficulty with this interpretation remains the ambiguous notion of space which Castells deploys to construct his theoretical object. In The Urban Question, and counter to his efforts to weaken the hold of our ideological beliefs, Castells presumes a "given" notion of space as a condition for the production of his theoretical object. The process of specifying the urban, it will be remembered, entails the isolation and correlation of elements of the social structure with the logics of spatialization in capitalist societies.[59] What Castells perceives to be the dominant logics of spatialization, determine which processes are going to be regarded as "urban". Although Castells opposes a simple equation of the urban with space, there is a constant slippage in his earlier texts between the urban, which is supposedly a process with no necessary spatial reference, and particular spatial units which we call cities. It is here, one could argue, that the very power of urbanist ideology, which Castells criticises so cogently, still imprisons his earlier writings.[60]

Although these problems are addressed in some depth in his "Afterword" to The Urban Question, Castells still repeats similar theoretical logics in his reformulation of the urban. Though he opposes a mechanical application of grand theory, and argues for a historical rendering of theoretical categories, he still insists on the **spatial specificity** of urban processes.[61] He also suggests possible explanations for the growth of urban social movements by reference to particular spatial logics.[62] Again there is a continuous slippage between the "urban", "urban areas", "urban units" and "urban space", so as to make

the notions almost synonymous. At a crucial point in his analysis, when responding to critics of his urban problematic, he asks:

> This having been said, in advanced industrial societies, what is to be done, it will be asked with so many "urban" themes that do not deal directly with the reproduction of labour power? Must we, for instance, leave to one side such important themes as the place occupied by urban growth in capital investment and financial speculation? Is not the occupation of the urban centres by the skyscrapers of company headquarters an urban theme?[63]

He then proceeds to outline possible responses to the question he poses himself. The basic problem which he faces is not dealt with. Given that his own definition of the urban hinges around the reproduction of labour power, what could he possibly mean by the notion of "urban" which would not concern these processes? He can only be referring to spatial units of collective consumption, which in empirical terms would obviously contain processes other than the reproduction of labour power. His defence against the question he poses is to argue for the relative autonomy of the urban within the social system as a whole. Not that this would mean complete independence from the social structure, but it would articulate the different elements of the social structure within the collective reproduction of labour power.[64] Yet this does not solve the problem either, both because the idea of relative autonomy is not clearly elaborated and, more importantly, because it still confuses the conceptual abstraction of the urban with particular physical/spatial manifestations.

Moreover, even if we were to eliminate this notion of "real objectivity", there is still the problem of objectivity in the sense that it is possible to specify, in an exhaustive and a priori fashion, a separate object of analysis. This goes to the heart of the early Castells' project to construct a rigorous and scientific approach of urban politics. Using Althusser's epistemological practice, Castells wants to constitute the essence of the urban around a positive category so that scientific knowledge can be produced. He thus assumes, as a condition of his theoretical endeavour, that it is theoretically possible to determine the essence of a given phenomenon and that it is possible to produce scientific knowledge of particular processes.

This effort to build his project on an objective basis, whether it be the spatial giveness of urban areas or a structural sub-system of the capitalist mode of production, forms the basis of my disagreement with Castells' earlier philosophical outlook. The desire for an objective grounding of his earlier problematic results in a deep ambiguity which hinges on the double-edged goals of his early approach. On the one hand, he is trying to make sense of phenomena surrounding the reproduction of labour power in advanced capitalist societies. At the same time, however, he is engaging himself in the far more ambitious project of founding a new urban sociology. In this regard, the urban is depicted as a spatial unit of collective consumption, and is viewed as a structural sub-system of the capitalist mode of production. The former problematic requires a historical and contextual examination of social and political processes in late capitalist societies. The latter project aims to articulate an abstract concept of the urban, premised on a passage through the referent, whether this be spatial or structural. While both these currents are present in Castells' earlier texts, it is the attempt to formulate an abstract category of urban phenomena which dominates his approach.

By seeking to discover the objective laws and logics of the urban, Castells reduces the temporal and contextual dimensions of his work, and confirms the realist and idealist elements in his theory. This suggests that Castells himself had internalised the ideology of urbanism in that he assumes the urban to have an objective point of reference, rather than being a social and discursive construction. As I shall argue in the following chapter, this preoccupation with the objective structures, elements and logics of the urban, precludes an adequate historical and political analysis of urban problems.

Meta-substantive questions

In examining Castells' contribution to urban political analysis one ought not to remain at the level of theoretical **practice**, but should also examine the **substantive content** of his theory. Thus we need to consider the **type** of objectivity which informs his earlier approach. I

turn, therefore, to the second set of propositions which I advanced at the beginning of this chapter. What are the concrete consequences of his formalistic method of theory construction?

The Urban Question is the most structuralist text which Castells has written. As with the philosophical basis of his early work, Castells drew heavily on Althusser's rethinking of historical materialism, and the ideas of Marxist structuralism are used to criticise previous urban sociological theories and serve as a basis for reformulating urban political theory. Most of the "meta-substantive" concepts which Castells uses in the deconstruction and reconstruction of his problematic, from the category of structure and subjectivity to his conception of social change, are drawn from this tradition of analysis. Castells also makes use of Poulantzas' theory of the state and power in capitalist societies for his investigation of urban politics. As a basis for assessing Castells' urban theory, I turn now to a critical evaluation of the Althusserian interpretation of historical materialism.

Althusser's reading of historical materialism

My reading of Althusser's substantive reworking of Marxist theory will focus on certain problems which have emerged in relation to Althusser's reformulation of Marx's theory of history. These problems, which I take as symptomatic of an essentialist theory of the social, are manifest in three ways: regionalism, economism and structural determinism. This is particularly true for three major concerns. His rethinking of the mode of production, the "overdetermined" contradiction and the subject. Let us begin by recalling briefly some of the basic elements of Althusser's rethinking of the materialist dialectic.

Just as Althusser criticised the Hegelian conception of truth for reducing our knowledge of the world to a primary essence - Absolute Spirit embodied in the movement of the Idea - he also opposed a monist interpretation of historical materialism. And just as he argued against the constitutive role of the human subject in the production of knowledge, he challenged any conception of history which was reduced to

the actions of autonomous human agents. This dual imperative resulted in a re-theorization of the fundamental tenets of Marxist models of history. Here Althusser challenged the notion that the history of societies could be understood by examining the essential contradiction between the relations and forces of production.[65] He also affirmed the "later" Marx's effort to displace the primary role of autonomous individuals as the motor force of historical processes by specifying the necessary laws of historical movement in which the human subject is placed, and by elaborating a different theory of **ideology** and **subjectification.**[66] The deployment of structuralism enabled Althusser to make the Marxist conception of determination and contradiction more complex, by introducing the notion of "structure in dominance" and by "decentring" the constitutive role of the subject.[67]

In addressing the first imperative, Althusser reinterpreted two key aspects of Marxist theory. Firstly, the unity of the mode of production and, secondly, the Marxist conception of social change. Regarding the first, Althusser sought to account for the nature and role of the superstructures without recourse to the "base-superstructure" metaphor. To do this, he conceptualized the mode of production as a relationship between three different "practices" or "levels", rather than a relationship of simple determination between the economy and the state/ideological instances. Thus a social formation consists of systems of social practice located in the economic, political and ideological regions of the social totality.[68] Each of these instances has its own characteristic forms of articulation depending on the particular form of a given mode of production. These forms of articulation are accorded a **relative autonomy** from each other and, significantly, from the economic level. In order to theorise this, Althusser attempts to displace the Hegelian totality, which is unified around a single principle, by introducing the structuralist idea of a **decentred mode of production.** He thus locates each element of the mode of production in the wider context of a structural ensemble which embraces, as a condition of each element's form of existence, all the instances of a particular mode of production.[69] This formulation is legitimised by referring back to Marx's remarks on the correct method of political economy in the 1857

Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy. Here Marx asserts
that the "simplest economic category ... can only ever exist as the
unilateral and abstract relation of a pre-given, living concrete
whole."[70] The idea of production, for example, is a meaningless
abstraction unless it is specified in the context of a concrete set of
social relations. In Althusser's conceptualization of the mode of
production, therefore, it is not possible to derive the form and nature
of the other regions of the social formation from the economic level.
Nor is it possible to reduce their nature to the phenomenal forms of an
economic essence, in that the different instances only exist in a
"complex structured whole". Thus each level of a social formation
requires the other levels as a condition of its own existence.[71]

Though Althusser strives to construct a theoretical space in which
the "superstructural" instances may be accounted for, he adds an
important caveat which is designed not "to sacrifice unity on the altar
of 'pluralism'", as this would mean a fundamental break with the Marxist
concept of totality along with its distinctive "unity of a structure
articulated in dominance".[72] Hence he retains the idea of economic
determination though only "in the last instance".[73] What Althusser
means, and hopes to achieve, with this notion is not always clear. At
one level, the concept is largely gestural and appears to have little
efficacy. Althusser suggests that because every element of the social
formation, and every social contradiction, is essentially overdetermined
(each element contains within it a necessary reference and co-presence
of other elements), there is never any possibility of economic
determinism. As he puts it:

> the economic dialectic is never active **in the pure state**; in
> History, these instances, the superstructures, etc. – are never seen
> to step respectfully aside when their work is done or, when the Time
> comes, as his pure phenomena, to scatter before His Majesty the
> Economy as he strides along the royal road of the Dialectic. From
> the first moment to the last, the lonely hour of the 'last instance'
> never comes.[74]

While here the concept is denuded of any real significance, at other
points in his writings the concept has a more active theoretical role in
that it serves to determine which element is to be dominant in a social
formation.[75] Thus "determination in the last instance" performs the

"transhistorical" function of specifying the particular configuration of a type of mode of production.[76]

Central to any historical materialist account of social formations is the question of social transformation. In Marxist theory this has hinged on the idea of **contradiction** and its concrete expression in the **antagonism** between **social classes.** In Althusser's reading of the materialist dialectic, the problem of contradiction occupies a central place, and it is here, following his structuralist reformulation of the mode of production, that Althusser introduces the concept of **overdetermination.** This concept is employed in contradistinction to interpretations of social change which reduce the complex character of historical processes to a simple tension in the social order. In Marxist language this would be the contradiction between the forces and relations of production manifested in the struggle between social classes. Althusser's account of a concrete historical conjuncture in which a decisive political antagonism occurs, or in which antagonisms are displaced, entails analysing a number of historical contradictions and currents located in all levels of the social formation. Althusser argues that in all Marx's and Engels' concrete analyses, the economic contradictions are never simple or isolated from other historical forms and circumstances. The capital-labour contradiction is specified, therefore, by the superstructural instances, particular national and international contexts, and so forth.[77]

Borrowing from Freud's description of condensation and displacement in the representation of dreams,[78] Althusser argues for the overdetermination of any contradiction, whether it be condensed into a revolutionary rupture, or displaced into a set of unconnected events.[79] The concept of overdetermination can only be appreciated in the context of Althusser's reformulation of the historical totality as "a complex, uneven structure in dominance", and _vice versa_. Thus Althusser argues for the plurality of contradictions in any historical conjuncture, tensions which cannot be reduced to the economic level, but necessitate, as a condition of Marxist theory, the existence of other contradictions. He also stresses that these contradictions do not unilinearly correspond

to one essentially determinant level, but are subject to Lenin's and Trotsky's idea of "combined and uneven development".[80] Historical events, therefore, are situated in a far broader social context than that presupposed by the "base-superstructure" model of determination.[81]

At a more concrete and conjunctural level, the concept of overdetermination specifies the interaction of the abstract logics of the social formation to explain historical continuities and discontinuities. Here the concept has a number of meanings and functions. Firstly, it refers to the multiplicity of contradictions and historical currents, between and within the different levels and instances of a social formation, which account for particular historical events. Thus the concept denotes the complex character of historical processes, and can be equated with the notion of multi-causality. Secondly, the category of overdetermination is concerned with the nature of political antagonisms by focussing on the manner in which "ruptural unities", or "revolutionary situations", actually occur or are effectively dispersed. Here Althusser discusses the **symbolic** character of historical events and the way in which a revolutionary "moment", for example, condenses a number of disparate elements into a political moment. This much more radical sense of the concept emerges in his analysis of the political mechanism by which the Russian revolution was crystallised, that is, the fusion of a number of contradictions into "a ruptural unity".[82] Thirdly, the category explains the dominant contradiction in historical situations. As I have argued, Althusser retains the idea of a dominant contradiction around which political antagonisms emerge or are displaced. Overdetermination is used here to open the Marxist conception of history to the possibility that the dominant contradiction is not necessarily given by the economy. As against this identification of the determining and dominant contradictions, Althusser employs the idea of overdetermination to specify the manner whereby the dominant contradiction is the **resultant** of the plurality of contradictions in any concrete conjuncture. Because the dominant contradiction is a product of the "play", as he construes it, of overdetermination, there can be no a priori determination of the "weakest link", in Lenin's terminology, in historical situations.[83]

The second important element in Althusser's theorization of the materialist dialectic concerns the problem of the subject and its relation to the ideological instance of the social formation. Althusser argues that a central aspect of any Marxist conception of society is a rejection of the constitutive role of the individual at both the historical and epistemological levels. Accounts of social processes ought not, therefore, to begin or end with the analysis of "great men" or the ahistorical, homo economicus of liberal theory. For Althusser, the individual in any social formation is the bearer or "support" of social structures.[84] This way of approaching the problem directs attention to the structural conditions in which "the role of the individual in history" may be understood.[85]

While in no way accepting an individualistic interpretation, Althusser offers a radical approach to the constitution of subjectivity by introducing the category of interpellation.[86] Borrowing heavily from Lacanian theory, Althusser argues that ideology functions to transform individuals into subjects by providing the means for people to experience the world.[87] It is, as he argues, the "'lived' relation between men and the world", that is, the historical structures of meaning through which human beings understand and make sense of their particular conditions of existence. While apparently exercised at a conscious level of social organisation, ideology, for Althusser, functions in a profoundly **unconscious** fashion as a set of structures, institutions, rituals, customs and historical traditions, which actively constitute individuals as subjects even though individuals may appear to be determinant.[88] This ideological relation is complex for it predicates an overdetermination of a real and an imaginary relation between human beings and their conditions of existence. As Althusser writes, ideology

> is not a simple relationship but a relation between relations, a second degree relation. In ideology men do indeed express, not a relation between them and their conditions of existence, but **the way** they live the relation between them and their conditions of existence: this presupposes both a real relation and an **'imaginary'**, **'lived'** relation.[89]

This symbolic fusion between a real and imaginary relation cannot be purely instrumental for it is not possible, according to Althusser, to

escape ideology or employ it in an external manner. Ideological relations are always constitutive of the social and can never be replaced by true reality.

Deconstructing Althusser's theory of history

I shall now move to a critical reading of Althusser's substantive contribution to the reformulation of historical materialism. In the next chapter I shall indicate in more detail how the criticisms I pinpoint in Althusser's structuralist conception of society are refracted in Castells' own theoretical argumentation. I start by outlining the main difficulties in Althusser's texts, before examining how these weaknesses are operative in Castells' general approach to urban politics.

My starting point for the critique of Althusser focusses on his concept of relative autonomy. His attempt to rethink the economic determinism of the base—superstructure model of historical materialism by separating out various dimensions of the social, gives rise to an a priori regionalism. As I have shown, Althusser outlines three systems of practice - the economic, the political, the ideological - all of which are relatively separate and independent of each other. Each instance could be sub-divided into sub-elements, as the economic is in capitalism, and each possesses particular logics of operation. Apart from the intrinsic problem of separating out different aspects of the social formation and examining them in isolation, this formulation of historical materialism contains two central incompatabilities.[90]

On the one hand, while Althusser opposes economic determinism, his structuralist reading of history is not able to escape the problems he poses. His argument for the relative independence of other elements, such as politics and ideology, is based on the fact that they are necessary conditions of existence for the economic sphere. Similarly, his notion of an overdetermined contradiction also problematizes a simple economic (or any regional) causation of historical events and processes. The essentially symbolic character of the social implied by overdetermination radically questions all necessary and objective logics

of the social. However, these advances are immediately negated by Althusser's insistence on the determining role of the economic level, even if only in the last instance. It should be remembered that although he denies that the economy determines all social relations in all social formations - the political instance may be dominant in feudalism, for example - it is the economic which determines which level is to be dominant in **all** social formations, as well as determining the outcome of processes in the last instance. Thus the economic instance performs a trans-historical, one might say transcendental, function in Althusser's discourse. It determines in an a priori fashion the different and particular forms of all social formations. Not only is this problematic for an understanding of different modes of production - assuming, that is, that all modes of production consist of the same elements combined in different ways - but it is also problematic to assume that it is possible to subsume particular social formations under a single, essential mode of production.[91]

On the other hand, it might be possible to argue that Althusser's idea of structural causality, premised as it is on his notion of "structure-in-dominance", allows the possibility of a non-economistic reading of social relations. Instead of the usual economic determinism of Marxist discourse, there would be structural effects comprising all the relations of a "structure-in-dominance". Here the principle of causation is expanded to include all the relations operating in a structure, without one of the elements being given a priority. This may point to a way out of the dilemma which Althusser's theory finds itself in, but, as it stands, there are still some important problems. We can address these if we turn to his theorization of the subject.

The category of the subject was central to Althusser's rethinking of historical materialism and in particular to his rejection of voluntaristic interpretations of Marxism. In doing so, he displaced the centrality of human intentionality and stressed the largely unconscious and structural conditions of identification and subjectification. In this way, he shifted the centre of gravity away from individual units of analysis to the system as a whole, by stressing the entire gamut of

discourses, institutions and rituals through which subjects are constituted in a given social formation. However, in carrying out this theoretical operation he simply replaces one form of causality with another. Instead of endowing individual human beings with an independent will to act and choose, it is the structure which ultimately determines the identity and position of the subject. It is this structuralism which undermines his efforts to break with a deterministic and objectivist account of social and political relations.

These theoretical closures point to a dualism in Althusser's theoretical writings. On the one hand, he attempts to break with the determinism of Marxism by introducing categories such as relative autonomy, overdetermination and the subject. On the other hand, he undermines these conceptual breakthroughs by retaining categories such as determination in the last instance, structural causality and a fully-constituted mode of production and social formation. The central argument which should be borne in mind in this regard is the necessary incompatability of these two logics of the social. The idea of overdetermination suggests a contingent and symbolic relationship between different practices, and the idea of a relative autonomy of social relations.[92] At the same time, however, a "superhard transcendentality", to use Wittgenstein's phrase, is retained in which a logic of necessity, whether economic or structural, ensures that everything is determined and submerged under an essential law of society.[93]

These incompatabilities in the Althusserian problematic are strongly reflected in Castells' earlier writings, and they have important consequences for his structuralist theorization of urban politics. In particular, his understanding of the emergence of urban social movements, his attempt to determine their political character and his effort to make sense of their strategic importance. More specifically, Castells follows the Althusserian method of attempting to outline an objective account of urban politics. Further, he accepts the regional separation of the social as a condition for the analysis of urban political practices and utilises the categories of relative autonomy and

overdetermination to theorize the relation between social structures and political practices, and to provide a non-reductionist and non-economistic account of the capitalist state. In the next chapter attention will be paid to the way Castells employs the Althusserian theory of social formations in the attempt to theorise urban social movements. I will also concentrate on the way the basic structural dualisms in Althusser's reading of Marxism, while initially opening the terrain for Castells' investigations, ultimately prevent a proper engagement with the specificity of urban political practices.

Chapter 5

A Structuralist Theory of Urban Politics

As we turn to the earlier Castells' theorisation of urban social movements, we reach the most concrete and complex level of our investigation. This is because it is necessary to draw together the various threads of my philosophical and meta-substantive critique in order to show how these criticisms affect Castells' early theory of urban politics. I shall concentrate this investigation on The Urban Question and City, Class and Power.

A general theory of urban social movements?

As I have stressed, the early Castells' method of theory construction, following Althusser and structuralist methodology more generally, extends the most abstract and simple categories into more concrete and complex spheres of analysis. The theorisation of conjunctural political phenomena such as urban social movements requires this procedure. As Poulantzas has argued this movement from the abstract to the concrete can take at least three paths: the subsumption of the particular under the general categories of a theory, the logical derivation of the more concrete from the abstract, both of which follow an idealist course, and, lastly, the one he put forward, a method of articulation in which lower level categories and determinations are the work of theoretical construction.[1] Seen from this perspective, Castells' philosophical procedures display an idealist orientation in that the idea of collective consumption, as the key category organising his early problematic, is constructed through the extension of Althusserian categories into the urban realm in a purely formal fashion. The elaboration of the urban categories is simply deduced from the general concepts and logics of historical materialism. This logical deduction of categories tends to subsume the more concrete and specific urban subsystem under the all-encompassing mechanics of the capitalist mode of production.

Deriving and subsuming the concrete under the abstract, Castells subordinates the particularity of urban social movements under some general law of social formations. This is a problem which is not peculiar to Castells' investigations. Rather this difficulty in Castells' early paradigm is a problem common to a number of sociological theories of social movements and collective action. It pertains to the project of constructing a **general** theory of collective behaviour.[2] To take the mainstream American sociological tradition and the Marxist tradition as examples, it is possible to show the difficulties posed by social movements, and political action in general, for macro-theoretical accounts of society and social change.[3] In both these approaches, the priority of structural "explanations" or, more accurately, the structural pre-conditions for collective action, whether the focus be on questions of integrating "irrational" generalised beliefs as in the case of structural-functionalism, or on revolutionary conflict based mobilisations as in the case of Marxism, tends to reduce the specificity of social movements to the rational logics of pre-constituted systems.[4] This has led some theorists to argue that the very conception of social movements and collective action threatens traditional theories of society grounded as they are on notions of stability, holism and rational patterns of social change.[5]

This problem afflicts Castells' earlier attempts to outline a theory of urban social movements, caught as it is in the Althusserian endeavour to construct a coherent Marxist theory of the social. This is manifest in a way which is symptomatic of a "grand theory" of social change: the theory explains both too much and too little. By this I mean that in attempting to provide a transcendental framework for the understanding of urban social movements – necessary and universal logics which explain the emergence and character of urban social movements – the theory subsumes the specificity of each particular set of urban practices. In other words, the deployment of a general theory obliterates the differences of particular historical contexts and tends to "flatten out" an understanding of different conjunctures. Instead of theoretically informed explanations of processes in historically specific contexts, one is presented with a general set of theoretical causes and conditions

which are supposedly valid for all instances. At the same time, however, and here I turn to the narrowness of general theory, certain considerations which are not part of the theoretical framework are excluded in an a priori fashion.

The second aspect of this problem suggests a further difficulty associated with Castells general account of urban social movements, and abstract theories of collective action more broadly. This relates to the kind of theoretical postulates which usually accompany "grand theory". Borrowing as he does from Althusser, Castells presents a comprehensive account of social movements in which his theory purports to explain the emergence, character and effects of urban social movements across time and space through reference to an all-encompassing set of theoretical logics. These logics are derived from Althusser's reading of historical materialism, a theory which, as I have shown, sets out to exhaust an understanding of social relations in a given conjuncture. This rigid application of a preconstituted conceptual framework, as well as the objective and determining character of the theory itself, constitutes a major source of difficulty for Castells' earlier analyses of urban practices.

I shall now turn to a more thorough examination of the effects of his more substantive propositions. Initially, I will consider Castells' definition of urban social movements before critically evaluating his explanation of the emergence, the character and effects of these phenomena. Lastly, I will consider some of the strategic recommendations put forward by Castells.

Defining urban social movements

In The Urban Question Castells provides the following definition of urban social movements:

> a system of practices resulting from the articulation of a conjuncture of the system of urban agents and of other social practices in such a way that its development tends objectively towards the structural transformation of the urban system or towards a substantial modification of the power relations in the class struggle, that is to say, in the last resort, in the power of the

state.[6]

From the outset it is necessary to emphasise the dualism which underwrites Castells' attempted theorization of urban social movements and which is evident in this general definition. It is manifested in the antinomy between the structural determination and the relative autonomy of urban practices. On the one hand, Castells clearly locates the explanation and understanding of urban social movements in the domain of urban political practices. Urban social movements are defined, therefore, in relation to historically specific contexts, with regard to the activities of social agents and in connection with class struggles directed at the state. In all these respects, Castells makes an effort to develop the contingent historical and political logics which I pinpointed in Althusser's effort to rethink historical materialism.

However, in a similar fashion to Althusser, these more open-ended logics are effaced by the structuralist gestures in his early texts. For the particular "conjunctures", the "systems of urban agents", the specific "urban political practices" and the "power relations" toward which urban social movements are directed, are all determined by the structural laws underpinning the concrete practices of the agents and all are explained by reference to the abstract structural system. As I have pointed out in my genealogy, what Castells calls "the structural determination of urban political practices", means that every urban problem, forming as it does the structural prerequisite for urban mobilisation, every social agent mediating between the abstract logic of the system and the concrete political practices, as well as the entire organisational system which articulates different practices together, are determined by the urban system and the wider social structure of which it forms a part. As he puts it:

> Urban practices form a system. But they do not, of themselves, have a signification. Their only signification is that of the structural elements they combine. These combinations are realised by means of agents, on the basis of the determination and the multi-dimensional membership of these agent-supports. The field of urban practices is a system of combinations between given combinations of structural elements. It realises and manifests, at one and the same time, the structural laws of the system, of its reproduction and of its transformation, of its organisation and of its contradictions.[7]

The great _aporia_ in this definition of urban political practices, of

which urban social movements form a part, is the provision of some explanatory connection between the system and the particular, historical and contextual manifestations of the structure. At this stage in his development, the priority accorded to the system of structural determination is designed to allow Castells to account for the emergence, formation, and effects of urban social movements in any given conjuncture.

The second central feature in Castells' definition of urban social movements is the notion of effects. Urban social movements are defined by the "objective" effects they produce on the urban system ("the structural transformation of the urban system") or on the overall balance of class forces ("a substantial modification of the power relations in the class struggle").[8] In stressing qualitatively new effects, both at the level of structures and practices, Castells employs objective and idealised criteria for assessing urban social movements. Effects are measured either against a fully-constituted system which is theoretically presupposed, or against a normatively determined set of political practices – the class struggle – which are also, in the last instance, determined by the overall mode of production. In both cases the criteria for assessment are objective and rationalistic. Thus, on a theoretical level they suppose a general and comprehensive knowledge of a historical conjuncture before the concrete analysis of a particular urban mobilisation has taken place. This is the result of an a priori methodology and substantive theorisation of the social which is assumed to hold for all possible capitalist societies.

The emergence of urban social movements

From The Urban Question to City, Class and Power

Castells' efforts to explain the emergence of urban political struggles and, more particularly, urban social movements in The Urban Question and City, Class and Power demonstrate the inadequacies of his objectivism. In the theoretical hypotheses and propositions put forward by Castells in The Urban Question, as well as in the set of empirical case studies

which demonstrate his abstract theses, Castells concentrates on a series of structural contradictions - "stakes" or "issues" as he calls them - which form the underlying structural prerequisites for the emergence of urban struggles. These contradictions are idealised, retroactive theoretical constructions in Castells' approach in that they are isolated and interpreted after the occurrence or non-occurrence of collective action in accordance with his abstract theory of capitalist reproduction. These contradictions are then used to determine the system of agents who are engaged in the given practices. The system of agents is, according to Castells, supposed to accord with roles and levels specified by the structural relations surrounding a given urban contradiction.[9]

The stress on urban contradictions as structural conditions for the emergence of urban protest are not simply necessary prerequisites but are also causal determinants. Hence they decide the likely character and effects of urban struggles. In his hypotheses on the study of urban social movements, Castells emphasises a number of instances where contradictions will be deeper and produce greater effects: the more they affect the economic system (and the converse is true for the "political" and "ideological" regions), the more contradictions have accumulated, "the more there is a potentially mobilising charge."[10] Apart from the priority conceded the economic region, there is also a problematic separation of the economic, the political and the ideological spheres, which I have discussed in my readings of Althusser's views. And, moreover, apart from the economism of this approach the absolute focus on objective pre-conditions for mobilisation rules out the examination of subjective criteria. By subjective criteria, I mean the values, discourses and organisational ensembles, as well as the political logics through which they are articulated, which are equally important in determining whether or not collective action will take place at all and help us understand the forms and effects of these mobilisations.

The explanation for the emergence of urban political practices in City, Class and Power is much more sophisticated, representing as it does the attempt to substantiate and test some of the hypotheses set out

in The Urban Question. In the essays presented in this text, analysis is directed at the structural logics underpinning the emergence of urban politics, as well as the particular logics of urban political protest itself. His attempt to specify in more historical detail the structural contradictions underlying the politics of collective consumption in advanced capitalist societies hinges around two important processes: the deepening contradictions in the collective-consumption sector of capitalist societies and, furthermore, the attempted production, distribution and managements of these collective means of consumption by interventions from the capitalist state. Again these two logics form the objective structural conditions for the emergence of urban political protest.[11]

Whereas the arguments in The Urban Question tended to describe a naturalistic spatialisation of the means of consumption as symptomatic of urban contradictions in monopoly-capitalist societies, City, Class and Power focuses on the evolutionary socialisation and collectivisation of the means of consumption, and points out the dialectical contradiction between this socialisation of reproduction (along with with the production sphere) and continued capitalist accumulation.[12] The objective tensions between the private and the collective (derived from Marx's teleological vision of capitalism) are manifest in numerous ways both at the general level of capitalist development and in relation to the urban system.[13] Private accumulation, he argues, in advanced capitalist societies is characterised by increasing concentration and centralisation. This entails the concentration of labour power and, as he puts it, "the concentration of the means of reproduction of this labour power, i.e. the means of consumption."[14] The collective use of these means is determined both by the tendency toward socialisation and its provision by the state. Other structural contradictions are manifested by the evolution of capitalism in its monopoly phase in that the processes of profit realisation requires the stimulation of consumption and the consequent valorisation of the consumption sector. However, to perform this function, the structure of consumption requires **collectivization.**[15] Similarly, the historical evolution of the productive forces also causes an increasing concentration of the labour

force in particular spatial configurations. Lastly, the development of the political class struggle in capitalist societies reinforces the tendency toward collectivisation through placing growing demands on the state to provide collective means of reproduction.[16]

The second structural precondition in Castells' more elaborate and historically specific explanation for the emergence of urban social movements focuses on the nature of the capitalist state in advanced capitalism. As I have argued, one of the defining features of collective consumption in this phase of his writings is the role of the state in providing the collective means of production. Castells argues that the state not only reinforces the concentration of the labour force, thereby increasing the contradictory nature of urbanisation in advanced capitalism, but it also **politicizes** and "globalises" the urban question in these societies. Because the state is perceived as the principal agent responsible for the provision of collective consumption, the entire urban process becomes a "politico-ideological competition" rather than a strictly economic and technical problem.[17] In this sense, the urban question becomes integrally embroiled with the issue of political power and the struggle between social classes.

This two-pronged structural analysis of contradictions in advanced capitalist societies allows Castells to specify new social inequalities and cleavages which may serve as the basis for new political struggles. He explicates these new social inequalities by focusing on three specific instances of structural contradiction, that is, housing, transport and global models of urban planning, and also presents a series of case studies of France in the 1960s and 1970s.[18] He concludes that the contradictions in the provision of collective consumption add three dimensions to our understanding of political divisions and conflicts in advanced capitalist societies.

In the first place, the more traditional class inequalities are replicated in this new sphere of objective social contradiction. This means that the old income, educational, and occupational differentials characteristic of capitalist societies directly reinforce and prescribe

the access to and style of collective consumption provision, as well shaping overall relationships to the urban system.[19] In other words, the provision of collective consumption in the public sphere is still determined primarily by market variables. But secondly, however, apart from reinforcing already existing imbalances, these contradictions give rise to new disparities which, though arising out of "consumption politics", do not correspond directly with positions in the class system.[20] These new social divisions are specific to the urban system and concern, for example, contradictions in the organisation of public transport, discrimination against the aged, access to housing for marginal social groups such as immigrants and so forth.[21] Though in a sense overdetermined by class divisions, these contradictions are, according to Castells, relatively autonomous from the overall social formation and specific to the urban system.

In the third instance, these specifically urban contradictions add a further dimension to our conception of antagonisms in late capitalism in that they expand the objective basis of anti-capitalist struggles. This is bowing to the fact that urban problems cut across narrowly defined class divisions to embrace an ensemble of disparate social groupings which would not normally share a collective identity or experience of capitalist oppression. Urban questions such as those pertaining to public transport or the enviroment are not specific to a particular social class but point to the structural contradictions in capitalist development itself. Urban contradictions thus open the potential for a far broader alliance or community of interests which can be directed at the capitalist system rather than the purely empirical manifestation of class domination such as the bourgeoisie. The emergence of urban social movements provides, therefore, a practical means of bringing about generalised social transformation by articulating the demands unveiled by these new objective contradictions and advancing a more general anti-capitalist political force.[22] These arguments suggest important consequences for Castells' understanding of the character as well as the actual and potential effects of urban social movements in late capitalism. I shall examine these questions after critically evaluating

the "transitional" or "middle" Castells' account of the emergence of
urban political practices.

While the arguments explaining the emergence of urban social
movements in City, Class and Power are far more persuasive than the
earlier models, there are still some important shortcomings and aporias
in the account. I will start by questioning Castells' theorisation of
the structural logics which he outlines as the necessary conditions for
the emergence of urban social movements. I shall then turn to the
problem of theorising the linkage between the contradictory structures
and the emergence of urban forms of political struggle.

Some problems with the category of collective consumption

Central to Castells structural logic underpinning the emergence of new
social forces in late capitalism - urban social movements - is the
character and provision of, as well as the demands arising from, the
means of collective consumption. The category of collective consumption
has, quite rightly, been seen as Castells' major contribution to urban
political sociology, and the concept has proved useful in specifying and
explaining a number of processes in advanced capitalist societies.[23] At
the same time, however, there are a number of difficulties surrounding
the category which have provoked widespread debate. On a philosophical
level, questions have been raised about defining the urban in terms of
consumption processes,[24] while others have used the notion of collective
consumption to organise research into "urban problems" without accepting
the spatial connotations of such a deployment.[25] I will not pursue these
criticisms here as I have outlined my philosophical disagreements with
Castells' early efforts to ground the urban in my earlier evaluation.
Basically I accept those critics who have attempted to disarticulate the
spatial and social dimensions of collective consumption processes.[26]
Thus I agree with those commentators who recognise the usefulness of
collective consumption as a social category for understanding certain
historical logics in capitalist societies, rather than regarding the
concept as a real and essential object organising research into the
urban domain. Both these approaches can be located in the early

Castells' texts, though as I have attempted to show, the structural and objective logics of his theory tend to undermine the more contingent elements.

Two important substantive questions surrounding the category of collective consumption are raised in the secondary literature on Castells, and need to be considered in this context. Firstly, what is the precise theoretical relationship between production and consumption in Castells' discourse? Secondly, how is the notion of collective consumption demarcated?[27] It is in regard to these two questions that a deconstructive reading of Castells opens up some important possibilities obscured by Castells' earlier perspective. One of the most common critiques of Castells' early writings centres on his supposed separation of consumption and production processes. More specifically, these attacks have come mainly from Marxist writers sceptical of any effort to separate these two essential processes in capitalist societies. Mingione summarises the major thrust of these criticisms as follows:

> The consumption process is only a partial aspect of the general production process. Production (in a strictly technical sense), distribution and consumption relations are highly interdependent and together form the social relations of production, i.e. the social structure. One cannot consider the consumption processes separately from the other two aspects of the capitalist reproduction process.[28]

Other Marxist accounts have also stressed the indissoluble relationship between production and consumption processes, located as they are in the systemic nature of the capitalist relations of production.[29] Now, as some commentators have stressed, Castells has no intention of separating the two spheres.[30] Rather, he attempts to isolate the specificity of "urban" processes within the overall relations of the capitalist system. The processes are always in some way or another connected and inter-related. This can be clearly seen in Castells' theorisation of crisis tendencies in American capitalism.[31] But, and this is Castells major theoretical proposition, when it comes to explaining the emergence of political practices, it is not possible to reduce the consumption process to the production system.

The simple identity of production and the reproduction of labour power is, therefore, contested in Castells' attempt to locate the specificity of social struggles pertaining to the urban domain. To be more precise, it is not possible to explain urban social movements by reference to the production relations of a given social configuration. On a formal level, this is certainly the right starting point for an analysis of urban social movements, but in Castells' attempt to theorize the connection between the two realms the result is not very clear. In fact, his notion of the urban system and the provision of collective consumption, grounded as it is on a notion of relative autonomy, run into the familiar dualisms which have been associated with the Althusserian approach as a whole.

We can see these tendencies more clearly once we focus on the second structural precondition for the emergence of urban social movements. This is the role of the capitalist state as the stabilizer and politicizer of imbalances arising in the urban system and within the overall reproduction of the capitalist system. The role of the capitalist state as a condition for the emergence of urban political struggle in City, Class and Power is premised on a functionalist conception of the value of labour power and on an automatic conception of capitalist reproduction.[32] Regarding the former, Castells, drawing on Marx's theory of value, argues that the value of labour power is determined by the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the reproduction of that labour power. The necessary subsistence level is determined by what is accepted or normal in any given social configuration. Much of the debate about this formulation hinges on the meaning of "normality" or "acceptability". We get a clearer picture of this notion if we turn to the Marxist idea of the reproduction of capitalist relations. In Marxist theory, the notions of reproduction, and production, are rooted in an objective conception of the social largely independent of so-called subjective variables, in which a functionalist and historicist account of social reproduction predominates.[33]

In Castells' case, this can be shown in the way in which he explains the pre-eminence of contradictions in late capitalism. It is done by paying attention to the evolutionary dynamics of capitalism itself. And the importance of collective consumption is explained either by reference to the periodisation of capitalism - the movement from competitive to monopoly capitalism, for example - or, at a deeper theoretical level, by reference to the development of the productive forces in a given social formation. It is true that other "subjective" variables are introduced in order to explain the contradictions in the provision of collective consumption, but these, as I shall argue below, play a strictly "supplementary" role in his analyses.[34]

Using functionalist categories to determine the value of labour power, and also to explain the reproduction of social relations, means that the level of collective consumption provision is fixed by strictly objective criteria. More precisely, according to the level of subsistence necessary for the "objective" reproduction of the labourer. Ultimately, this form of argumentation is premised on the Marxist fallacy that labour power in the capitalist mode of production is just like any other commodity: to be bought on sold on the market. This fails to recognise the vitally important political, ideological and disciplinary conditions which have to be continually satisfied if workers are to actually perform their allotted tasks.[35] This leads Castells to conclude that the provision of collective consumption is always functional to the interests of the capitalist system, and, thus, if the system is to reproduce itself then the provision of collective consumption simply facilitates that very process.

In Castells' concept of collective consumption it is the capitalist state which performs this role as a kind of automatic regulator of the system.[36] As such, the argument crystallises the series of dualisms which have been alluded to so far in this critical reading. As I have suggested, Castells draws on Poulantzas' theory of the capitalist state to explain state interventions in advanced capitalist societies. This theory of the state provides something of a solution to the dilemma which Castells is attempting to address: how to account theoretically

for the fact that the capitalist state may intervene in what appears to be the interests of the working classes - providing the collective means of consumption, for example - while still ensuring the overall reproduction of the capitalist system and continued class domination? Poulantzas' notion of the relative autonomy of the capitalist state represents an explicit attempt to account for this anomaly in capitalist social formations. In other words, as Poulantzas puts it, a structural relative autonomy from the capitalist class is a necessary condition for the reproduction of the capitalist class itself. The relative separation of the state apparatuses simultaneously allows the differential constitution of class power (the organisation of the different capitalist class fractions and the disorganisation of the dominated classes) and permits the capitalist state to become the symbolic representative of national universality.[37] Hence the state mystifies the relations of domination by representing and guaranteeing the rights of all citizens. This is what Poulantzas has called the isolation effect of the capitalist state.[38]

More particularly, with regard to our object of analysis, this functioning of the state is manifest in its interventions to guarantee the reproduction of labour power by providing housing, transport, educational facilities and so forth, and thus allowing the smooth economic and political/ideological reproduction of the system.[39] This is not to say that the capitalist state is completely "free" to conduct its tasks and thereby to ensure the continued reproduction of the system. It is just that if the system does reproduce itself, then the capitalist state can be portrayed as fulfilling its structural logic. The difficulty with this line of functionalist reasoning is that any victories achieved by working class and popular political struggle are immediately understood in reformist terms, that is, as reproducing their own class domination.[40]

While these arguments do make sense at a purely descriptive level, and do go some way in accounting for the Marxist paradox of the capitalist state acting against the short-term interests of the ruling class, in theoretical terms they demonstrate the problems of

structuralist and functionalist accounts of social and political relations. As I have tried to show, the origins of these dilemmas lie with the Marxist notion of the systemic reproduction of capitalist societies. If one assumes that the capitalist system functions as a social totality, and if there is the reproduction of the capitalist value form, then all the elements of the capitalist system are functional to this form. This renders the idea of a relative separation of the capitalist state and the provision of collective consumption meaningless. In other words, while Castells definitely opposes the reduction of consumption and reproduction processes to the dominant logic of production, he provides no theoretical reasons to explain why and how this is the case. On the contrary, his underlying theoretical assumptions tend in completely the opposite direction.

The theoretical endeavours of Castells and Poulantzas make more sense when placed in the historical contexts in which they wrote, that is, the developments in European social democracy during the post-World War 2 period.[41] Instead of recognising the specificity of this particular form of historical bloc - the hegemony of Keynesian demand management, the welfare state and so forth - and setting out to examine the historical conditions of its existence, their theoretical logics were generalised into account of capitalist reproduction and crisis. Thus, rather than a contingent and contextual analysis of these processes, Castells attempts to ground his understanding of contradictions generated by the provision of collective consumption in terms of the evolutionary dynamics of capitalist societies taken as closed systems of social relations and governed by rational logics of history.

The second problem associated with Castells' category of collective consumption relates to his demarcation of its collective dimension. There has been some confusion as to what the notion of collective refers to in Castells' theory, as well as what is excluded by the concept.[42] Mingione once again specifies this problem in cogent terms:

> If we add the adjective "collective" to the word "consumption" we raise a number of questions which French neo-Marxist urban sociology scholars have not answered. What can be called collective

consumption and what individual consumption?[43]
Castells, as I have argued earlier, was equally unclear about the exact
meaning of collective consumption in his earlier writings. There the
idea referred to the increasing spatial concentration of consumption
processes,[44] whereas in more later writings he specifies the role of the
state as the provider of the means of collective consumption as
determining the meaning of collective.[45] This ambiguity in Castells'
formulations is not simply a linguistic confusion for there are
important substantive consequences involved as well. If, for instance,
the emphasis is placed on the communal aspect of collective consumption,
then it would have to embrace providers of collective consumption which
extend beyond the state to include private companies, for example. If,
on the other hand, the category is restricted to state interventions,
the distinction between public and private consumption would become
blurred in that certain state provided means of collective consumption
are not restricted simply to public goods. As some British commentators
have argued, these more complicated divisions could have important
political, ideological and sociological implications in different
historical formations.[46]

As we have seen in City, Class and Power, Castells' notion of
collective consumption is used as the theoretical grounding of urban
social movements to justify his notion that urban politics objectively
expands the anti-capitalist political struggle and opens the path for a
multi-class, parliamentary road to socialism.[47] Apart from the idea that
"urban" issues cut across narrow class positions, there is also implicit
in this argument the notion that the objective socialisation of the
means of reproduction goes hand in hand with the socialisation of the
means of production. It thus lays the basis for the progressive
dissolution of capitalism and its replacement with socialism. This
argument has been presented both sociologically and normatively. Hence
Marxist theorists have urged that in objective historical terms there
has been, and will continue to be, a systematic concentration and
socialisation of the means of production and collective consumption. At
the same time, they have also suggested that the socialisation of the
means of production and consumption constitutes an essential condition

for the construction of a just, socialist society.[48] Castells' arguments seems to repeat both these classical Marxist injunctions; and both are problematic. In the first instance, Castells' notion of a teleological concentration and socialisation reflects the specificities of one mode of capitalist regulation which can by no means function as a universal and necessary feature of all capitalist societies. As more contemporary neo-liberal strategies have demonstrated, there is no inner necessity in the increased spatial and social concentration of the means of collective reproduction.[49] Strategies of flexible accumulation, characteristic of what some have called disorganised capitalism,[50] have seen massive deurbanisation and deconcentration as the condition for increased capital accumulation.[51]

Similarly, on a normative level, the notion of a progressive collectivization and socialisation of the means of production and reproduction, which in Castells' earlier writings was exclusively associated with state ownership and distribution, as a condition for socialist transformation, is equally problematic. Notions of a universal class rationally organising an objectively collectivised social structure in the interests of the community as a whole has theoretical and historical difficulties.[52]

Deconstructing and reinscribing the concept of collective consumption

To articulate the theoretical specificity of collective consumption for an understanding of reproduction politics, and also to be able to use the category of collective consumption without reducing its identity to production relations, requires a different, non-essentialist theoretical contextualisation of the category. In other words, in order for the category to be useful both in the specific context of European social democracy and in cases which only share a family resemblance to this historical configuration, certain theoretical conditions must be specified. In the first place, the rigid notions of structural determination and the closure of the social totality have to be deconstructed. To retain the idea that the social has an internal logic means that any effort to think relatively autonomous logics within that

totality can at best supplement the already existing logics that
pertain. From this position, the dualisms characteristic of Castells'
and Poulantzas' writings are inevitable. Secondly, in this theoretical
context one needs to recognise the contingency and constitutive openness
of social formations. Social orders are not given by the essential
logics of history but are politically constructed in specific contexts.
The Gramscian notion of historical bloc moves precisely in this
direction stressing as it does the continuous hegemonic articulation of
social and political identity.[53] To move in this way, would allow a more
subtle understanding of the relative autonomy of the capitalist state,
along with the politics of reproduction and consumption, for they would
not be determined by the essential logic of the social formation taken
as a whole.[54]

It must be added that these more open-ended logics have been
developed to some extent by certain readings of Marxist theory.[55] To
take the pivotal notion of reproduction as an example. The major reading
of Marx's notion of reproduction stresses the necessary logics of the
capitalist system. In this interpretation, the concept of "normal"
subsistence levels was not to be determined biologically. Rather, unlike
other commodities, the value of labour power always "contains a
historical and moral element."[56] The notion of "normal" subsistence
levels as involving non-economic and external conditions of existence
represents the starting point for a decisive rupture with a purely
economistic and closed understanding of capitalist relations. Of course,
it depends how these external variables are treated in the theoretical
framework: if they are purely contingent and accidental to the logic of
capital, then they have no theoretical role to play and are of little
importance. If, however, they are integral to the understanding of the
reproduction of labour power, then the classical Marxist notion of
theorising the value of labour power as any other commodity immediately
breaks down. In this case, the reproduction of labour power is an
intrinsically political as well as an economic process. In other words,
the reproduction of labour power is not determined, and measured, by the
internal logic of the capitalist system but is dependent on notions such
as the disciplining of the labour force, the securing of consent at the

workplace and so forth. If this alternative notion of reproduction is followed, then the ahistorical and functional requirements of the system need to be challenged in the name of a more complex and contingent understanding of capitalist reproduction.

Theorists of capitalist regulation have followed this route of analysis.[57] They have deconstructed the Marxist category of reproduction and replaced it with the idea of regulation. The production of this concept represents an intrinsically political and historical approach to the question of social reproduction. Instead of concentrating, in a teleological fashion, on a fully constituted and automatic reproduction of the system, they stress the construction of a mode of regulation which includes ideological, social and economic conditions of existence. The emergence of a particular mode of capitalist regulation cannot be derived from some underlying logic of history, but is a contingent political result predicated on power struggles between competing strategies and hegemonic projects.[58] This theory of capitalism and social formations breaks with the notion of a closed and determined conception of social formations and opens the possibility for a more flexible and nuanced approach to questions raised by the provision of collective consumption. We will examine to what extent the logics proposed by these theorists is followed by Castells' later approach to social reproduction and transformation.

There are two possible strategies of weakening the problems associated with the second difficulty which was located in Castells' use of the category of collective consumption. In the first place, it is important to recognise, contrary to Castells' arguments, that contradictions which emerge around the provision of collective consumption have no necessary political orientation. While they need not result in progressive - for Castells "democratic socialist" - forms of political protest and articulation, there is no reason why they should not. This depends primarily on the effectiveness of political strategies and projects in discursively articulating these contradictions and demands. Secondly, in contrast to Castells' notion of an inherently progressive socialisation and collectivisation of society as a condition

for socialist transformation, one can stress the plurality of political communities, including urban social movements, within the state and civil society, as a more democratic condition for anti-capitalist political projects.[59]

Connecting structures and political forms

We come now to the second central difficulty in Castells' understanding of the emergence of urban social movements. This concerns his effort to delineate the relationship between the structural logics of the capitalist and the urban system, on the one hand, and the emergence of political practices on the other. Most critical assessments of structuralism have focused on the problems of subjectivity, agency and social change.[60] Many have pointed to the dualism between structure and political subjectivity which emerged as structural categories were extended into the field of the human sciences. This is, of course, a central problem for most contemporary social and political theory.[61] Now although these difficulties are replicated in Castells' earlier theories of urban social movements, it is sometimes possible to overlook the fact that this problem was at the centre of his theoretical endeavour. This is made explicit in The Urban Question, even though his answers in this text are the most problematic.[62] It is also easy to rebuke structuralist efforts to reconcile the ubiquitous structure/agency dilemma without attempting to provide an adequate theoretical solution to this major conceptual impasse.

In both The Urban Question and City, Class and Power, Castells concentrates his investigations on outlining the structural preconditions for the emergence of urban political mobilisation and struggle. This is, as he argues, necessary to counter the voluntarism of liberal, structural-functional and Marxist theories of action which he felt dominated accounts of political protest and mobilisation.[63] Clearly it was also a function of his Althusserian and structuralist genealogy. The major problem with his accounts is the complete lack of a theoretical connection between the pinpointing of structural contradictions in the capitalist and urban systems, on the one hand, and

forms of political protest on the other. At best, he simply grafts a highly simplistic account of the subjective variables - political organisation and ideological position - onto an already completed account of objective conditions, without exploring the implications of such a grafting.

The way these questions are dealt with reflects the essentialist grounding of his theory. This is because the so-called "subjective" variables are evaluated in relation to objective criteria which precede the assessment as such. This is characteristic of most sociological theories of political antagonisms and collective action in which it is assumed that a necessary and sufficient account of political practices entails the specification of the objective conditions of exploitation, oppression or strain without recourse to the discourses, beliefs and values specific to a particular historical context.[64] Similarly, no effort is made to theorise the specificity of antagonistic relations which are assumed to follow automatically on the heels of structural dislocations. This lack rules out any recognition of what Olson, for example, has called the "collective action problem". These accounts treat as unproblematic, therefore, the difficulties which emerge in any effort to mobilise people for collective action, and underestimates the organisational prerequisites for successful collective action.[65] Moreover, the exclusion of subjective variables results in the failure to theorise the institutional context against which urban political struggles must act. I will consider some of these themes in more depth by examining the different positions which are presented in Castells' earlier work.

Tentatively, it may be suggested, and these points will be developed in more depth when I consider the political implications of his analysis of urban social movements, that this severe gap in Castells' theorisation is a function of his acceptance that the traditional representatives on Left-wing politics - the European Communist Parties and the trade union movements - will automatically provide the organisational and ideological support for urban social movements. It is simply assumed that they would guarantee an institutional framework, as

well as the appropriate political ideology, to correspond to the objective social conditions of the struggles.

The Urban Question has been widely read as Castells most structuralist text and as such has been strongly criticised by a number of commentators.[66] As I have suggested, the analysis of urban political practices in this text posits an intimate connection between structures and political practices. The system of determination moves from the most abstract structures to the most concrete practices in an unproblematised linear fashion. This has led Castells to argue for a complete identification between the two levels of analysis such that structures "only exist in practices".[67]

Perhaps somewhat disingenously, Castells has argued in his earlier replies to criticism that, although his theorisation of the urban system hints of structuralism, his analysis of urban social movements displays an excess of voluntarism![68] These reflections are made in response to a criticism levelled by Borja.[69] Borja argues that the theses presented in The Urban Question fail to take into consideration the opposition to urban social movements presented by other structurally determined interests and political forces. Following Borja's arguments, Castells argues for a dialectical interaction between these two dimensions as a means of understanding urban social movements more adequately:

> In fact, a study of urban social movements can be carried out only by observing the interaction between structural interests and the social agents that constitute the movement and the interests and social agents that are opposed to it.[70]

He then outlines a grid of analysis which contains four dimensions of analysis: the issue of the movement specified by the structural content of the movement; the internal structure of the movement and the interests of actors represented in it; the structural interests that are opposed to the movements; and the effects of the movement on the urban structure and wider political and ideological relations.[71]

It is clear from this reassessment of his early arguments that Castells has in no way moved away from a structuralist understanding of urban politics. The entire analysis is premised on the structural

determination of the issues which give rise to urban movements, the agents which condense these contradictions, and the interests which these agents are supposed to represent. Moreover, the emphasis accorded to qualitative new effects on the structure still presupposes a fully constituted system of social relations. While in some sense recognising a dualism between structural and voluntarist theories there is no theoretical resolution of the problem.

The theoretical arguments and empirical analyses which are presented in City, Class and Power are an attempt to go beyond the tentative theoretical arguments in The Urban Question. While alluding to the problems of structuralism and voluntarism in its various essays, and stressing the need for its deconstruction,[72] the book does not go beyond the dualism. This is evident in the purpose and theoretical premises which he outlines. As he puts it:

> The purpose of this research is to study the social conditions of emergence, of dominated class practices, which, arising out of urban contradictions, directly or indirectly transform social relations against the dominant structural logic.[73]

Moreover, in the theoretical propositions which he puts forward to carry this out, he makes the following statements:

> (W)e put forward the hypothesis that a collective action is characterised at one and the same time by the structural stake to which it relates, by the social position of the actors concerned, and by the forms the actions take. Moreover, it is defined by its effects on social structure, i.e. the urban system, political relations and ideological structures.[74]

Once again, these formulations do not take us beyond the objectivism of the early texts and, though as we shall see in the empirically oriented analyses, a more sophisticated notion of politics and political strategy does emerge in this phase of his writing, this is is not matched at a theoretical level. To demonstrate in more depth the consequences of this failure to account in theoretical terms for the specificity of the political in making sense of urban social movements and political forms in general, I come to the last element in my assessment of Castells earlier theorisation of urban social movements. This concerns what I have called the politics of urban social movements.

The politics of urban social movements

Characterising urban social movements

In this section, I will critically examine the different attempts by Castells to specify and explain the political results and implications of his theory of urban social movements. The propositions put forward in The Urban Question form the essential reference point for his earlier theses. Hence these theses, though under-developed, set the basic parameters which the research in City, Class and Power mainly complement. Castells' theorisation of the politics of urban social movements subsumes the **character** of urban social movements under an examination of their **effects.** Thus the variables which I take to form the character of social movements – their distinctive aims, composition, values, strategies, structure and so forth – are explained by reference to the effects they produce on a predetermined structure. This is the first essential step in his argumentation. The second step is to explain and measure the nature of these movements by reference to the structural determinations and contradictions which gave rise to them. All the criteria for determining the nature of urban political practices are rooted in essentialist categorisations. This is true for the structural contradictions, the system of agents who concretely embody the system of places and who articulate the structural contradictions, and the wider social practices which Castells subsumes under the notion of "organisation".[75]

The "subjective variables", which go under the category of organisation, are explained by reference to the ideological, political and strategic correspondence or non-correspondence with the objective contradictions embodied by the system of agents. In other words, the organisational variable "works" in the production of certain effects to the extent that it fuses together the urban contradiction with other social practices. For structural change to be realised two further conditions must be satisfied in this regard. Firstly, the imported practice and discourse of the organisation external to the urban contradictions must strike a correct balance between an intervention

which simply "fragments" the urban agents in a reformist movements or merges them in a "single globalising" opposition. Secondly, genuine structural change requires what Castells calls a correspondence between the objective (class) interests of the urban struggle (determined by the issue and the agents) and, as he puts it, the correct political and ideological "line". This line is dependent "on the class interests represented by the organisation in a given conjuncture."[76]

Strategic questions

From these propositions, and arising out of the empirical analyses he presents, Castells puts forward his strategic recommendations concerning the political role of urban social movements. In the first place, he argues that urban political practices have to be linked to a broader political project for structural effects to be achieved.[77] Without this broader influence, urban political protest would always tend to be reformist and easily absorbed by the ruling forces. As he suggests, the talk of urban social movements is in itself a contradiction in terms, for it implies a political struggle which emerges spontaneously out of the experiences of urban contradictions. The two effects which concern Castells in strategic terms - urban social movements directed at the production of urban effects on the urban system and social movements rooted within the urban domain but directed at a confrontation with the state - require the intervention of an external political force.78

Moreover, if urban social movements are to have any wider social impact they must be linked to the more global class struggle. As Castells suggests, therefore, urban contradictions which are articulated into political forms of protest, though structurally secondary to the overall class struggle, assume a significance when taken in conjunction with other struggles in particular historical situations. These arguments reflect the Leninist principles which Castells championed at the time he wrote The Urban Question.[79] Hence the need to import external political discourses into an inherently reformist set of protests and the need for an external set of political alliances under the leadership of the vanguard party to confront the capitalist system

in a decisive battle for state power. It also reflects a rather simplistic understanding of the student protests of May 1968, and contributes to his rather optimistic, or perhaps reckless, injunction at the end of his text that the "conclusion...(of urban political struggle)...is in the streets."[80]

While City, Class and Power introduces certain additional elements to Castells' early theorisation of urban political movements, as well as substantially reworking their strategic implications, the basic structure of his explanatory paradigm remains unaltered. More particularly, Castells makes his account of the effects of urban struggles more complex. In his synthesis of research on urban political protest in Paris during the late 1960s and early 1970s, he outlines a threefold typology of effects produced by urban struggles. Firstly, **urban effects** are based predominantly on working class economic organisation and centred around immediate demands related to the reproduction of the labour force. This form of protest he calls a "trade-unionism of collective consumption".[81] A second process of urban political protest centres around a multi-class political organisation aiming for the reorganisation of the urban system. This is named an "urban political movement".[82] A third form of urban political protest is structured predominantly around ideological organisation emphasising issues pertaining to the environment, for example. This form of protest is depicted as exhibiting a low level of mobilisation and aimed at a reordering of social relations and is called an "ideological urban movement".[83] In overall terms, therefore, Castells' new emphasis displaces his regional analysis of urban political struggle from the causes to the effects of protest.

The theoretical explanation for these different effects reflects an attempt to deal more adequately with what I have called the subjective variables of collective action theory. Firstly, these explanations offer a nuanced and historically specific assessment of the internal **composition** of urban protest. Are the organisations, for example, controlled by students, workers or petty-bourgeois elements? Secondly, a greater emphasis is placed on the effects of the **institutional system**

and, in particular, a historical account of the state in shaping the outcomes of urban protest.[84] Thirdly, more attention is paid to the **political practices, discourses** and **strategic decisions** adopted by the social forces themselves as a way of interpreting their success or failure.[85]

In attempting to explain the typology of urban practices he presents, Castells posits a fundamental disjuncture between the immediacy of local, urban based mobilisations and the generalised practices characteristic of politically and ideologically inclined urban protest. This, according to Castells, reflects the fact that urban protest is largely defensive, and tends, therefore, to react against the interventions of the state rather than confronting capitalist relations in a proactive fashion. This makes urban struggle dependent on the discontinuities and particularities of the locality, and emphasises the need to take each urban struggle on its own conjunctural, rather than global, terms. Castells argues, and confirms in his empirical research, that efforts to generalise purely urban struggles to the wider ideological and political level inevitably result in a separation of the urban base from the broader struggles, and the ultimate disintegration of urban protest.[86] This leads to something of a paradox for Castells. If, as he believes to be the case, urban struggles are to maximise their gains on all levels (and he argues that even for immediate economic demands the support of a wider political organisation enhances the possible outcomes),[87] then the political and ideological dimensions are necessary. But for urban movements to do this themselves results in the dissolution of those movements.

In order to dissolve this paradox, Castells repeats his earlier thesis that the production of wider political and ideological effects requires an importation of discourses from an external organisation, but he adds another twist to this proposition. As he argues, the dilemma cannot be resolved from within the dynamics of urban protest itself, but only through the way in which political struggles are related to broader political and ideological forces. Thus urban protest requires the existence of supportive forces, yet must remain independent of these

wider political struggles so as to maximise independent urban and political effects. For these two processes to go hand in hand, Castells proposes a new political strategy for Left-wing political forces, which results in a substantial break from the more traditional Leninist parameters.

This strategic rethinking emerges from Castells' understanding of collective consumption politics in late capitalism. Castells' argument concerning the politicisation of collective consumption suggests a broadening of the objective base of anti-capitalist struggle. The problems associated with the urban question introduced new social forces into the political arena which could not be reduced to a privileged agent of progressive political struggle, such as the working class. Thus Castells emphasises the need to move away from a political strategy founded on a short-term link between urban social movements and the more traditional socialist agencies. Urban struggles, along with other new social movements, need to be articulated into a new anti-capitalist and democratic political project, and should not be subsumed under the imperatives of the older working-class organisations.

For this articulation with the "historical class struggle" to be mutual, Castells argues that the urban social movements can be seen to play an innovative and transformative role within this broader project without losing their own autonomy and independence.[88] This involvement can and is directed both at securing particular changes within social democracy and at putting forward democratic strategies to transform social democracy at the same time. These strategies involve the penetration of state institutions and the ideological transformation of social relations outside of the state in civil society.[89] Castells stresses, therefore, the multi-class nature of Leftist strategy and emphasises a democratic road to socialism. In broad terms, his strategic recommendations reflect a fundamental shift away from Leninism to a neo-Gramscian Eurocommunist approach.[90] Rather than a frontal assault on the capitalist state with the aim of smashing it – something akin to what Gramsci has called a "war of movement" – he emphasises the progressive dissolution of capitalist relations and the construction of a new more

plural historical bloc: a political strategy which Gramsci would surely have called a "war of position".[91] As Castells puts it:

> Within this new perspective, urban movements are those which most unify the interests of various classes and strata against the dominant structural logic, and which lead them to confront a state apparatus which has become the principal manager of collective goods. Moreover, to the extent that these struggles can bend the dominant structural logic, it can at the same time effect, in certain sectors, the functioning of the state apparatus and trigger its transformation in a more complex and contradictory process. From this viewpoint, urban social movements in France are becoming, whether one likes it or not, the essential sources of the new dynamics of struggles which is implicit in the revolutionary project now developing.[92]

Drawing some conclusions and setting out the tasks

The arguments and propositions put forward in City, Class and Power do represent a theoretical advance in Castells' understanding and explanation of urban social movements. The analyses are far more contextual and historical. There is a recognition that urban political practices have a logic and importance independent of the traditional Marxist agencies of transformation. Moreover, there is an attempt to engage with what we might call the subjective aspects of collective political activity: the internal aims and dynamics of social protest, the strategies and difficulties of social protest in relation to a particular institutional complex, the ideological discourses produced by various urban movements, the articulation between different forms of political protest and the shifting character of urban protest (from short-term and immediate struggles to more institutionalised social movement activity). This rethinking results in a far more nuanced and realistic understanding of the strategic consequences of the new social forces of which urban social movements form an integral part.

However, at a deeper theoretical level, many of the problems which I have isolated in The Urban Question remain for the most part unaddressed. Above all, Castells' arguments continue to be imprisoned in an objectivist and structuralist paradigm. While his focus in the essays presented in City, Class and Power, is directed at actually existing

urban political movements, rather than at outlining a set of theoretical conditions for the emergence of urban protest, it is assumed that the ultimate causes of these phenomena can be derived from the structural contradictions necessarily embedded in late capitalist societies. His arguments remained wedded, therefore, to an economistic and teleological account of social and political change.

This objectivity is manifest in an a priori regionalism and economism. As I have argued, the regional separation of the economic, political and ideological levels of the social formation influences both the structural causation of urban political practices and the explanation of the political effects of urban protest. Though this topographical division of the social into three separate spheres of existence is central to his argumentation, the theoretical necessity for the separation of regions, the exact definition of these regions and the precise usefulness of this separation, are never clearly articulated. Aside from the priority accorded the economic contradictions in determining social change, the economistic conclusions which emerge from this theorization centre on the character of the agents engaged in struggle. Though Castells expands his conception of urban political struggles to include non-working class subjects, there is no movement away from the class determination of social agents. In other words, all political agents are class agents whose interests are ultimately understood in terms of their location in the relations of production. This is clearly manifest in his analyses of the "Ecological Action Movement" where he continually draws a hard distinction between the ideological mystification of environmental problems and the real, objective class interests which ultimately underpins environmental discourse.[93] This is reinforced by Castells acceptance of the basic Marxist thesis that society is structured around class relations of power. These assumptions which commit Castells to a unified and closed conception of the social totality make it difficult for him to theorise a logic of the political, that is, a theorisation of the specificity of political antagonisms, the articulation between different political struggles and the production and dissolution of social relations.

To break with Castells' underlying structuralist paradigm, the understanding of political and social protest in advanced capitalist societies would have to satisfy a number of theoretical conditions. It would have to provide an account for the plurality of social and political dislocations in advanced capitalist societies, and more particularly in the "urban" domain, as well as a conception of dislocation itself which was not internal to a pre-given historical rationality. Secondly, it would require an explanation of the relationship between dislocations and the emergence of political struggles and conflicts, without simply assuming that dislocation automatically produces political practices. Thirdly, it would require a logic of the political to explain the forms of articulation or dispersion between the political forces which emerged.

All of these conditions, it will be argued shortly, would ultimately require the dissolution of of the idea that the social was a unified and objectively given totality, and an account of power in advanced capitalist societies which refuses to be based on the pre-given interests, usually economic, of political subjects.[94] Moreover, these propositions would require a decisive shift in the philosophical foundations underpinning the understanding of social phenomena. To what extent these conditions are satisfied in Castells' most advanced analysis of urban social movements will be discussed in the next two chapters.

Part Three

A Deconstructive Reading of the Later Castells

Chapter 6

Philosophical Questions and the Later Castells

The City and the Grassroots represents Castells' most concerted effort
to produce a coherent theory of urban politics within a general theory
of urban social change. Moreover, its theses are situated in a
substantially changed philosophical and theoretical paradigm. As I
attempted to outline in my genealogy of his major writings, this
transformation was the product of a number of forces, both historical
and theoretical. This chapter will attempt to provide a critical
contextualisation and interpretation of The City and the Grassroots, as
well as examining the changed theoretical paradigm, assumptions and
context against which this work can be viewed.[1]

Before I proceed it might be worth dwelling on the strategy which I
will follow in this theoretical evaluation, and in the presentation of
the philosophical and substantive assumptions which underpin this
interpretative exercise. I concluded the last chapter by setting out a
set of theoretical conditions for an adequate theorisation of urban
political movements and new social movements more generally. In this
chapter, I will assess to what extent these conditions can be satisfied
in Castells' later project. This requires a work of interpretation which
is critical, contextual and productive of the text it reads. These
notions, and the rationale for the deployment of this reading, need to
be more clearly specified. Deconstructive reading, as articulated by its
most well-known practitioner Jacques Derrida, and my interpretation
places itself squarely in this tradition, concedes a juridical priority
to the text which is being read.[2] The renunciation of a simple either-or
reading is premised on the necessity to expose possibilities closed off
by the author; the need, therefore, to radicalise possibilities not
pursued by the writer. This requirement is constitutive of the
productive nature of this reading.

In my reading, this juridical priority is conceded to The City and the Grassroots and the paradigmatic assumptions which structure its propositions. My aim is to move towards a more useful understanding of the urban and urban political struggles, taken within the context of what some have called the "new social movements", by critically engaging with this highly suggestive and sophisticated account. This engagement will, no doubt, do some violence to the existing text, but this is inevitable if such a reading is to be productive.

This is not to give in to a textual "free-play" as critics of deconstruction are apt to suggest.[3] The critical and contextual operations of a reading must also structure any work of critical interpretation. To neglect the conditions under which the text was produced, as well as the aporias and limit points which reveal the condition of possibility and impossibility of the text, would be to indulge in a contextless and structureless action which would simply reverse a reading in the name of an author's precise intentions. It is in line with these conditions that I pursue my critical reading of The City and the Grassroots. My reading of the text will present theses and arguments which are not necessarily what Castells may have intended or assumed. My discussions of the philosophical questions will begin with a fairly long excursion into the writings of Derrida in an attempt to locate a materialist ontology which will form the basis for both my philosophical and substantive understanding and interpretation of Castells' later writings.

Derrida's deconstructive reading of Western metaphysics: towards a radical materialism?

One overriding question has informed my evaluation of Althusser's rethinking of the Marxist tradition, and the philosophical discourses examined in this text more generally. What are the conditions for a radical materialism? The key question concerns the distinction between materialism and idealism.[4] Why is this question of central importance? It must be made clear that this distinction has nothing whatsoever to do with the distinction between thought and reality, word and thing, nor,

as it is put in certain of Marx's critiques of Hegel, the relationship between social existence and consciousness.[5] The distinction between idealism and materialism concerns the ultimate rationality of the real: the reduction of being to thought.[6] This question aims directly at what Heidegger and Derrida have called "the metaphysics of presence".

To open a space where it might be possible to conceive of a different relationship between thought and being, I shall briefly examine Derrida's deconstructive reading of Western metaphysics. Taking his lead from Heidegger's "destruction of the history of ontology",[7] Derrida's effort to overcome what he terms the "ontotheological" bias of Western metaphysics - the systematic prejudice against the temporal and historical experience of being, and its reduction to presence - concentrates on the dismantling of "logocentrism".[8] Derrida argues that Western metaphysics is permeated with a desire to ground philosophy in a transcendental fashion. This search for some ultimate foundation, centred on transcendental subjectivity or objectivity, has resulted in numerous attempts to liberate philosophical discourse from its own historicity and peculiar conditions of existence.[9]

Derrida's deconstructive reading of metaphysics seeks to weaken the notion of presence or objectivity which is prior to our representations and discourse. If it can be shown that there is nothing which precedes signification, then we are no longer bound to a given objectivity or subjectivity. To do this, deconstructive practice offers a subtle movement in philosophical and textual criticism. Rather than confronting a text with the assumption that both the text and critic constitute full identities, which may legitimately be counterposed, deconstruction seeks to engage with the advances and problems engendered by a text on its own terms. It displaces an "either-or" appraisal of theoretical arguments and conceptual configurations. By accepting that these arguments are particular constructions, the weaving together of different strands of thought from a variety of discursive traditions, a deconstructive stance works productively on and within a given text. It seeks to show **how** and **why** the production of particular conceptual formations constitute partial attempts to grasp reality by closing off certain possibilities

and by valorising certain gestures. Hence the production of categories and the constitution of identities, presume the demarcation and delimitation of an inside, and the active expulsion of an outside.[10] A deconstructive reading focusses on the aporias and ambiguities in a given text where discourses are blind to their conditions of constitution. The reactivation of these limit-points or moments of undecidability, as Derrida has characterised them, allows a deconstructive reading to examine the repression of certain possibilities, and the articulation of others, by a variety of literary and textual mechanisms.[11] Examining these moments of condensation within a particular context or structure, allows Derrida to account for the constitutive undecidability of our texts and discourses.[12]

In the following paragraphs, I shall begin by sketching out briefly the general contours of Derrida's approach to language. I shall then outline his deconstruction of Saussure's speech/writing opposition, where I will focus on his demonstration that the constitution of any "inside" both requires and excludes an "outside". I shall then examine Derrida's effort to account for the "undecidability" of this inside/outside dichotomy by focussing on his critical reading of Rousseau. Finally I will draw out some of the implications of his analyses which will be used during the rest of this evaluation. These remarks aim to provide a theoretical basis for my evaluation of Castells' later approach, as well as to outline certain categories and motifs, such as "the undecidability of the structure", "originary lack", and the "logic of the supplement", which will be deployed in my interpretation of Castells' substantive theory of urban politics.

Derrida and the question of language

Pivotal to Derrida's reading of metaphysics is the question of language. More particularly, he concentrates on a peculiar, yet revealing, disposition in the Western tradition, to subordinate writing to speech. This binary opposition functions as a metaphor for the repression of signification and representation more generally. Writing is reduced to the realm of parasitical and dangerous conveyer of presence, whereas

speech presupposes a direct and unmediated relationship with the Logos itself.[13] Derrida's project shows the constitutive nature of generalised writing or grammatology.[14]

Following Saussure and the "later Wittgenstein", Derrida suspends a "referential" conception of language, and accepts the view that meanings are produced relationally within particular linguistic contexts or "language games".[15] As Saussure argues in his Course in General Linguistics, the meaning of words is made possible through the system of differences in which they are articulated: the word "father", for instance, acquires meaning when different from "mother", "son" and so forth.[16] By suggesting an arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified, and by arguing that language is form and not substance, Saussure displaces a conception of language as a set of positive terms where words are endowed with meaning because they refer to particular objects.[17] Meaning, for Saussure and the structuralist movement which followed in his wake, is only possible within a total system of differential, non-positive terms.[18]

Much of the breakthrough which Saussure's theory of language represents is undermined from within his own text. Many of his theses - language as form and not substance, the decentring of the speaking subject, and the attempt to outline a general theory of semiotics - come up against contradictory logics in his text. A central problem, in this respect, concerns Saussure's synchronic gesture in which he replaces an essentialist notion of language with the equally essentialist presence of the linguistic system as a whole.[19] This is a function, paradoxically, of Saussure's seemingly anti-essentialist claim that the the linguistic sign is arbitrary. Positing a completely unmotivated relation between the signifier and the signified, Saussure breaks with any idea that a linguistic sign represents an object or entity in the world. He does not, however, break with a **fixed** relation between the signifier and the signified. Here Derrida's deconstructive reading of Saussure points to an even more deeply rooted assumption in Saussure's writings which is typical of the metaphysical tradition, namely a homologous relation between our language as a system of signifiers and

the meaning it is supposed to represent and convey. If there is a "natural" relationship between signifier and signified, as Saussure maintains, then the linguistic system as a whole determines the meaning of each signifier and we are presented with another form of presence - the linguistic system of differences as such.[20]

Derrida's deconstruction of structural linguistics takes a similar path to Wittgenstein's rethinking of analytical philosophy. The later Wittgenstein stresses the irreducibility of "meaning as use".[21] The meaning of our language is dependent on the its use in particular "language games" or "forms of life", and includes non-linguistic activities and objects in a general conception of meaning. This move begins to break down an absolute correspondence between words and symbols, on the one hand, and, on the other, an extra-linguistic reality which these signs are supposed to represent.

The deconstruction of speech and writing in Sausserian linguistics

Apart from the separation between reality or conceptuality (the signified) and a sphere of representation (the signifier), Derrida also criticises Saussure's attempt to outline a legitimate object of linguistic analysis.[22] In this regard, Derrida attempts to dismantle, and re-inscribe Saussure's privileging of speech over writing, a key opposition in Western metaphysics.[23] In Chapter 6 of the Course in General Linguistics, Saussure presents a classical version of the speech/writing relationship. He writes: "A language and its written form constitute two separate systems of signs. The sole reason for the existence of the latter is to represent the former."[24] Continuing, he outlines the main object of linguistic analysis as follows:

> The object of study in linguistics is not a combination of the written word and the spoken word. The spoken word alone constitutes that object. But the written word is so intimately connected with the spoken word it represents that it manages to usurp the principal role. As much or even more is given to this representation of the vocal sign as to the vocal sign itself. It is rather as if people believe that in order to find out what a person looks like it is better to study his photograph than his face.[25]

Immediately, one sees the beginning of a tension in Saussure's

delimitation of a linguistic object of analysis. In the first place, Saussure wants to secure a necessary object of linguistic investigation which cannot from the outset be regarded as representative or figurative. Writing, which is portrayed in this fashion, is thus made exterior to speech.

This delimitation is not, however, "natural" or "innocent" for it can only be secured through an active expulsion of writing, which, Saussure argues, has the propensity to threaten and disrupt the domain of speech or pure presence.[26] Writing is not simply outside speech and meaning, but threatens the desire for closure and has to be repressed. As Derrida puts it,

> one already suspects that if writing is "image" and exterior "figuration", this representation is not innocent. The outside bears with the inside a relationship that is, as usual, anything but simple exteriority. The meaning of the outside was always present within the inside, imprisoned outside the outside, and vice versa.[27]

The aim of linguistics, according to Saussure, must be to recover this "natural" relationship between speech and writing, between the inside and outside.

Saussure's attempt to subordinate writing to speech fails because of the other logics he introduces: the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign and language as a system of differential units. In both these respects, the logic of Saussure's arguments require that the linguistic sign be conceived as a form of writing. As I have said, Saussure's linguistic sign is divided into a signifier and a signified, and this linkage is arbitrary.[28] As Derrida points out, this thesis makes it structurally impossible to subordinate, within the realm of the signifier, writing to speech. The very thrust of Saussure's theory of a structural linguistics militates against the construction of a natural hierarchy between aspects of the signifier.[29]

Moreover, Saussure's relational theory of language means that it is not possible to retain the idea of a naturally phonic essence of language. Though Saussure acknowledges that "linguistic signals are not in essence phonetic",[30] this essence has to be retained if he is to

separate and exclude the written and spoken signifier. This tension in his account runs as follows:

> The written form of a word strikes us as a permanent, solid object and hence more fitting than its sound to act as a linguistic unit persisting through time. Although the connexion between word and written form is superficial and establishes a purely artificial unit, it is none the less much easier to grasp than the natural and **only** authentic connexion, which links word and sound.[31]

On the surface, these reflections on speech and writing border on the trivial. But Saussure's obvious anxiety replicates a central theme in Western metaphysics, the notion that speech provides an immediate and transparent representation of pure thought about reality, whereas writing, comprising artificial marks and signs, which function at a distance and in the absence of the speakers presence, constitutes a dangerous and uncertain form of representation.[32] Though derivative of, and accidental to, the purity of speech, writing endangers the purity of presence because it embodies all those features, distance, delay, absence, exteriority, ambiguity, fabrication and so forth, which are antithetical to it. As Derrida argues, it is this uncertainty of the written signifier which accounts for Saussure's detailed, almost fascinated, attack on writing.[33]

Derrida shows, however, that Sausserian linguistics requires the written signifier. As Saussure himself argues, the written signifier provides "a permanent, solid object", which is "more fitting than its sound to act as a linguistic unit persisting through time".[34] Hence Saussure's theory of the linguistic sign can only be made consistent if the purely formal character of his theory is rigorously upheld. This means that the category of substance, in particular the "natural link" between thought and **voice**, meaning and **sound**, has to be bracketed and questioned.[35] It also means that all the characteristics of writing – absence, difference, representation, supplementarity – are integral to the structure of signification itself.[36]

Derrida's reading of Saussure's search for a valid object of linguistic analysis shows the impossibility of delimiting an unambiguous essence of speech from an external and dangerous writing. Saussure

cannot simply expel writing because it is necessary for the functioning of speech and signification more generally. This points to an **originary lack** in the structure of Saussure's linguistic object and the inability of a fully-constituted presence. Crucial to the deconstructive impulse is a necessary imbrication between the inside and the outside, and a structural undecidability between the one and the other. This play which will characterise the new concept of structure which Derrida attempts to outline.

Reformulating the speech/writing dualism: Rousseau and the logic of supplementarity

Rousseau's attempt to explain the relationship between speech and writing is symptomatic of his general preoccupation with the purity of origins (whether this be nature, animality, primitivism, childhood and so forth).[37] Derrida's reading shows the impossibility of this logic of purity in Rousseau's texts.[38] He does so by focussing on the ambiguities of the **supplement** in Rousseau's writings. Derrida's reading reveals a double usage of the concept of supplement, both of which presuppose an external relationship between the origin and its supplements. Whether simply adding to, or dangerously threatening and substituting the purity of the origin, the logic of the supplement enables Rousseau to articulate a relation between the essence and its other. Either the supplement is reduced to adding to something which is already present, or it simply replaces that which it supplements.[39] Moreover, while Derrida's reading is highly contextual, the deconstruction of Rousseau's theory of language is a necessary function of any logic of identity. Thus Derrida's reading provides a generalised critique of any essentialist logics.

With regard to the relation between speech and writing, Rousseau repeats the familiar gesture of subordinating writing to speech.[40] This is done in the name of the supplement and reveals the duplicity of his logic. Speech, though supplementary of the pure presence of nature, is the most natural convention for signifying thought.[41] Writing is added to speech as a representation which is not natural. As Derrida puts it:

"It diverts the immediate presence of thought to speech into representation and the imagination",[42] and functions as a dangerous mediation between thought and speech.[43]

How then to elaborate a relation of "supplementarity" without recourse to a simple logic of identity in which the outside remains forever external to a pure and innocent inside? In reformulating this relation, Derrida does not just rely on the semantic ambiguity of the word supplement. The constitutive role of exteriority entails a different conception of structure and identity. Gasche has called this an "infrastructural synthesis".[44] This involves the articulation of two contradictory logics in what Derrida terms an "undecidable". The non-dialectical synthesis of these logics requires the notion of an originary lack in the structure of identity and objectivity. Here the supplement both replaces a deficiency in the structure and takes the place of an absent origin.

In this new logic of the supplement, origins are always themselves supplements, that is, additions to or replacements for other originary lacks. This logic of supplementarity, as he puts it in Of Grammatology,

> would have it that the outside be inside, that the Other and the lack come to add themselves as a plus that replaces a minus, that what adds itself to something takes the place of a default in the thing, that the default, as the outside of the inside, should be already within the inside, etc.[45]

Hence the origin is always a retroactive displacement of a previous origin which it replaces or adds to. This accounts for the fact that the "new" origin is structurally unable to constitute a pure presence itself for its emergence is predicated on an absence in the previous structure.

The structure of this argument might be more clearly illustrated by drawing an analogy with Althusser's attempt to weaken the metaphysical reduction of being to thought. Althusser's criticisms of idealism and empiricism are similar to Derrida's critique of Western metaphysics. For Althusser, idealism reduces the other to the rational movement of the Idea, whereas empiricism, in its separation of the essence from the accidental, tends to externalise the other as purely contingent to a

necessary interior. Althusser's solution was to call for a separation between the real and theoretical objects of investigation, and thus to do away with the subject-object or inside-outside dichotomy. All this accords very well with Derrida's deconstruction of Western metaphysics and his attempts to go "beyond" the reduction of being to a unitary and given form. However, as I have tried to show in my reading of Althusser, these manoeuvres were effaced by Althusser's affirmation of the scientific nature of dialectical and historical materialism. In this regard, Derrida adds a further crucial twist to the story. By positing an originary lack in the structure of being or objectivity, he systematically weakens the claims of any rigid internal-external separation of being and thought. He thus opens the possibility of a radically materialist ontology in which the form of the object in no way exhausts the being of objectivity as such. I will now outline in some more detail the implications of this weakening of the boundaries.

Implications of a radical materialism

Derrida's reading of the metaphysical tradition makes possible a radically materialist ontology. Derrida's conception of language suggests an originary absence in the very structure of objectivity and subjectivity. The being of the world as it is constructed and "experienced" is not a pre-existent form, but is constructed in and through particular historical discourses. As Derrida demonstrates, these discursive totalities, can never be ultimately closed or fixed. This is because the construction of identity is always penetrated by a "constitutive outside", which functions as an identity's most essential condition of possibility.[46] Thus the constitution of identities and forms are penetrated by contingency and precariousness. Rather than a world of fixed identities existing in eternity one has an unstable set of forms which are always open to historical transformation and change.[47]

Accepting this continual slippage of meaning, which is premised on a constitutive openess of identity formation, Laclau and Mouffe have pointed to the political and historical construction of social

relations.[48] Renouncing essentialist logics of history and society, they investigate the way in which identities are hegemonically articulated.[49] Hence the meaning of objects and processes is the product of political contestation and struggle. The elaboration of discursive formations are the result of political projects, and are not simply determined by logics operating at an objective level, whether this be the economy, the logic of history, and so forth.[50]

A number of methodological consequences follow from Derrida's deconstruction of Western metaphysics. Firstly, Derrida offers a means of reading texts which differs considerably from other methods of criticism. Deconstruction permits the critic to accept and employ certain categories while, at the same time, remaining "distinct" from some of the claims made by the text. Wholesale acceptance or rejection is not, therefore, essential. This circumvents a stark "either-or" choice of possibilities. Derrida's deconstructive methodology aims to displace the **terrain** of analysis which make certain categories possible. "A willed reduction of a reduction" is the way Staten describes Derrida's relativising and historicising approach which questions, prior to the formation of meaning as such, the conditions of possibility for any identity formation.[51] In this way, Derrida can employ the logics presented by Saussure and Rousseau, for example, while, at the same time, situating their breakthroughs on a different terrain.[52] Reactivating the historical conditions in which concepts and discourses were constructed, and de-constructing their discursive conditions of possibility, Derrida is able to dilute the foundational claims of metaphysical systems while retaining and utilising, in a pragmatic fashion, their logics in new language games.[53]

What are the more substantive results of a deconstructive standpoint? Derrida's skepticism about the sign's capacity to represent reality unproblematically puts into dispute our unwary acceptance of reality. It immediately baffles empiricist, positivist and realist conceptions of knowledge, and calls into question objectivist accounts of social reality. In other words, approaches which accept the existence

of phenomena for knowledge outside particular social relations, and thus hypostatise reality in unchanging categories or forms.

But while a deconstructive perspective compels us to abandon an ultimate grounding of knowledge and truth, this does not imply radical skepticism or relativism. Rather it opens a number of different means, new language games, with which to understand the world, as long as this is conducted in a pragmatic and historically aware manner. It does not result in nihilism, but makes us aware of the plurality of ways of approaching phenomena in historically situated contexts. It does not entail a wholesale abandonment of meta-narratives and concepts characteristic of modernity, and metaphysics more generally, but the rigorous examination of their ontological and epistemological claims. Rather than rejecting the content of these responses to key intellectual problems, we need to assess the validity of their questioning and how their responses might be modified once we dissolve the transcendental foundations of their analyses.[54] It is the obviousness of metaphysical categorisation which needs to be reactivated and deconstructed in order to delineate its precise conditions of existence and the new possibilities opened up by such an operation, not the entire project of metaphysics and modernity itself.

A third consequence of a radical materialist ontology pertains to our conceptualisation of politics. Derrida's intervention makes possible a reading of reality which opposes the surplus of language and Being to the fixity and giveness of our knowledge.[55] His perspective emphasises the plurality and contingency of identity, rather than an essentially fixed conception of form. This lays a non-transcendental foundation for grappling with social phenomena by focussing on their constructed, that is, political nature. These implications will be explored in more detail in relation to Castells' later work in Chapter 7.

The philosophical bases of The City and the Grassroots

Following the numerous epistemological and methodoogical critiques of The Urban Question and his earlier writings more generally,[56] and in the

context of a generalised attack on the Althusserian school from a number of quarters,[57] Castells had a number of options to follow. He could persist with the Althusserian system regardless, but he himself already harboured doubts about it as was evident from his ambiguous deployment of Althusser's epistemological protocols. Alternatively, he could weaken the transcendental elements in Althusser's texts and try to develop possibilities which were closed off by Althusser's own writings. Finally, he could pursue a more empirically and historically based research strategy which would circumvent the problems of subsuming particular and contingent processes under the categories of an abstract "grand theory". In what I have called his middle or transitional writings, most notably the essays which make up City, Class and Power, it is the latter strategy which is employed to break-up the transcendentality of the earlier approach. Here Castells presents a number of case studies and empirical investigations which try to investigate more detailed and "regional" problems. That is, as opposed to a search for a global theory of urban phenomena based on an all-encompassing meta-theory, he argues for a "theorised history of phenomena" in which the specificity of the social and political context is paramount.[58]

The investigation of specific instances of urban processes - the examination of a particular strategy of urban planning or the emergence of an urban social movement - goes some way towards relativising and historicizing the earlier theses on urban politics. For all this, these arguments remain within what one might call the mainstream of sociological research. There is a commitment to a strong realist epistemology in which it is assumed from the outset that the world, and in particular an entity called "society", is structured in a definite and comprehensive fashion. In other words, the social has a rational structure which can be uncovered, given the correct research methods and theoretical instruments. Debate is centred, therefore, on gaining the correct access to the configuration we call society or the social processes which make up society.[59] Moreover, the historicization of concepts such as collective consumption and urban social movements, making them relative to particular historical conjunctures and in

specific bounded ensembles, still takes place against the backdrop of a Marxist problematic. Hence the centrality of economic production in capitalist societies, of political class struggle as the motor of history, the structurally constrained capitalist state and so forth, in his particular analyses.

Some of these philosophical and theoretical parameters are also retained to some extent in The City and the Grassroots. In fact, at first glance the epistemological and methodological procedures underpinning The City and the Grassroots, with their detailed attention to particular cases and the minute historical investigations as a precursory moment to theory construction, appear to represent a retrogressive movement to an "hypothetico-deductive" or, at worst, an empiricist or positivist conception of theory and methodology. The "bending back of the stick" in opposition to the imperatives of Althusser's abstract "grand theorising" seems to have replaced one orthodoxy with another, and the reliance on empirical case studies from a variety of cultural contexts to elaborate his theory of urban social change and urban movements seems to place his work in the "mainstream" of sociological and political analysis, that is, in the tradition of Parsons, Merton, Smelser, Nagel and so on.[60] His stress on "experience" and the factual basis of theory construction smacks of a simplistic empiricism in which theories are no more than high level generalisations expressing the regular relationships that subsist in a given world.[61] It might be possible, in this reading, to compare Smelser's "value added" explanation of collective behaviour with Castells' structural "verification" of urban social movements in The City and the Grassroots.[62]

But this is to miss the crucial addition of what I have called the hermeneutic dimension of this philosophical position. Careful consideration of his new position will reveal a different reading. His cautious process of theory building endeavours to steer a precarious path between imposing the abstract onto the concrete, with its concommitant recodification of historical situations rather than transforming their meaning, while not giving in to a simplistic

empiricism in which there are facts "out there" - unproblematically present as objects - in the real world before and without interpretations, discourses, theories and values. Castells makes it clear that his starting point is not a mythical tabula rasa waiting passively to record the world, nor is it a fully-fledged, transcendental understanding of the social and historical world. Instead, his approach consists of presenting some key hypotheses and assumptions with which he attempts to provide a reading of different historical situations in which urban social movements have emerged.[63]

These concepts are drawn from a variety of intellectual currents and are open and flexible enough to be transformed in the encounter with the particular research settings he examines.[64] Having attempted to analyse and theorise these different situations, he then presents a more systematic account of urban and social change in a theoretical form. This account fleshes out the initial core hypotheses and assumptions as well as modifying them in accordance with the results of the empirical investigations. In doing this, he draws on a number of intellectual traditions which he criticises and synthesises into a coherent conceptual framework. The resultant theory of history, his conception of social and urban change, his reading of the contemporary relationship between space and society, the interpretation of urban social movements and their contemporary significance, make no claims to exhaust reality or to form a new grand theory of history and society, but represent theorised histories of urban movements and their relationship with broader processes of social change.[65]

The strategy of his research programme implies, therefore, the existence of a core set of theoretical hypotheses, or what one might deem meta-theoretical assumptions, derived from his critical reading of a number of intellectual traditions, which then organise his empirical investigations and allow him to provide an interpretation of various social and political phenomena as they emerge in different historical contexts. These form what Castells calls "theorised histories of the production of meaning".[66] For these concepts to perform the function of generating an understanding of different processes at various levels of

abstraction, and across different cultural and political contexts, they have to be open ended and flexible enough to be deformed and modified as they are applied. In this regard he draws on Bachelard's writings on the philosophy of science:

> As Gaston Bachelard pointed out, the most useful concepts are those flexible enough to be deformed and rectified in the process of using them as instruments of knowledge. It is this capacity of enabling us to understand social processes and situations, and not the endless exercise of recoding experience in a comprehensive paradigm, that is the test for the fruitfulness of a theory.[67]

In other words, as Wittgenstein has argued in The Philosophic Investigations, a certain indeterminacy and vagueness can be more productive in explaining processes and relations, than precise "fully-sutured" concepts and categories.[68] A necessary openness or emptiness would allow for their extension into different domains and would prevent a simple imposition of theory onto reality so that no transformation of our understanding occurs.

This argument could be reinforced if we draw on an the analogy of rule-following as outlined by the later Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein argues that it is not possible to formulate a general law or rule for following and applying a rule.[69] To follow this line of thought in explaining the process of following rules would necessitate a further general law to specify the general law and so forth in an infinite regress. How then do we apply rules which structure our language and practices? Wittgenstein's argument is that each instance of rule following is particular and contextual. This means that every time we follow a rule we have to invent another one at the same time. In other words, every concrete instance in which a general logic is followed is always in some sense different from that which preceded it (and it is only because it is a different application that it is possible to show that a "proper" application of a rule has been learned and not simply copied). In this sense, in order to explain the following of a rule it is necessary to account for each instance of its application; it is not sufficient to refer to some general structure.

From my perspective, all Castells' efforts to weaken the objectivism and determinism of his previous methods of theory construction and application represent an advance over his earlier accounts. This is not so much to do with what I call the transcendental idealism of The Urban Question, but with regard to the realist texts of his "middle" writings. It concerns the idea that the case studies are used to construct the theory which he outlines. Now this insistence on a dialectical, or reciprocal, relationship between theory and empirical research clearly moves us beyond a method of pure logical derivation from core abstract concepts, or the subsumption of empirical cases under a general theory (both of which are evident in the earlier writings).

However, the new position which he outlines, though certainly moving in the theoretical direction I have attempted to set out above, displays a degree of naivety about how one constructs theory, and the supposed relationship between theory construction and the writing of narratives about situations one is investigating. It seems as if Castells is suggesting that our concrete empirical studies, while "produced" through the deployment of our categories and theoretical traditions, are also able, subsequently, to modify these theoretical concepts and traditions which have constructed them. It seems that the problem is more complex than this. As there is always an internal relation between our theoretical instruments and the narratives we construct, it is very difficult to see how the stories we tell can be anything but shaped by the theoretical categories. The constitutive openess of the later Castells' theory or research programme is to be welcomed, but the advance this represents must be more clearly specified. It is not that the theory is proved and/or changed through its contact with the empirical data, it is that the flexibility of the concepts enables "better" stories to emerge. The strength of a theory is exactly that it can be creatively deployed to provide a more compelling account of processes - to hegemonise a set of events in a more persuasive fashion, for example.[71] The fact that this requires a more flexible and open-ended theory tells us something about the theory, not only that the theory is modified by its encounter with social and political processes. When a theory "fails" it is a reflection of the contact, but the

"contact" does not determine the form of the new theoretical frame; rather the new theoretical language is articulated around the failures of the old theory to make sense of the situation.[72]

This begs the question about theory change and why one theory comes to replace another. If we were to remain with the argument that theories were modified by empirical research then we could depict the story of theoretical transformations as the progressive accumulation of data and the concommitant growth of theoretical knowledge. Some recent developments in the philosophy of science suggest the opposite picture. Thomas Kuhn, and the neo-Kantian French tradition, for example, argue that developments in the history of science are characterised by disjunctures and crises in which once accepted parameters of investigation break down and are replaced by new readings or interpretations of phenomena.[73] This means that "paradigms" or conceptual formations enter into "organic crises", to use a Gramscian analogy, and are unable to provide a coherent reading of events or processes. The growth of anomalies which cannot be repaired by a given "problematic" or research programme suggests that the indeterminacy and flexibility characteristic of successful theoretical problematics are becoming brittle and ossified.[74] Paradoxically, this weakness can provoke the most trenchant defences of orthodox views even though it is becoming increasingly clear that they are no longer providing compelling stories about situations.[75] This has been characteristic of the Marxist tradition, for example, which, when confronted with a breakdown of its theoretical categories during the latter part of this century, responded with ever more orthodox explanations of events.[76] It is in this crisis that a new principle of reading, or many new principles of reading, are put forward from a variety of sources. Through a process of hegemonic struggle, to retain the Gramscian metaphors, one particular reading may assume a dominant position and become normalised.

Now this logic of theory construction and "theory choice", as it is sometimes referred to, runs counter to the idea that theoretical discourse is tested, changed or modified in the process of its application to a variety of discursive contexts. Its ability to be

modified during its use is important, at least in this reading, because it tells us something about the theoretical problematic itself: a theoretical discourse which simply imposes itself on different situations is unlikely to provide compelling and novel readings of social processes.[77] This would be to make "scientific revolutions" or theoretical innovations something akin to what Mary Hesse has called "metaphoric redescriptions" rather than a more objective account of the things themselves.[78] And it is at this level of writing more plausible and compelling stories that the usefulness and coherency of a theory should be judged.

As I suggested earlier, Castells was presented with a number of possible paths to escape the essentialist theorising characteristic of his initial interventions. Castells' philosophical auto-critique of Althusserian structuralism, has hinged on the historicization and contextualization of his empirically oriented approach to urban politics and the adoption of a more eclectic approach to theory construction. In many respects this relativisation and radicalisation of his earlier writings accords well with the materialist ontology I have put forward in this chapter. My conclusions emerge out of another philosophical strategy which was available to Castells after his rejection of the assumptions underpinning The Urban Question, that is, the strategy of weakening Althusser's epistemological critiques of Marxist humanism and positivism by refusing the distinction he makes between science and ideology. In my attempt to explicate and deepen some of the philosophical bases of Castells's later writings, it is this strategy, along with the articulation of certain "deconstructive", pragmatic and and hermeneutical gestures, which I have pursued. In the following chapter, I shall explore the meta-substantive and concrete arguments put forward in Castells' later work. Important in this regard is the endeavour to examine to what extent the flexible and pragmatic philosophical assumptions which he has developed influences the substantive concepts and concrete conclusions he produces.

Chapter 7

Urban Politics in the Later Castells

The primary object of Castells' investigations in The City and the Grassroots concerns the relationship between cities, societies and historical change. His aim is to explain how and why, and under what set of conditions, cities are transformed.[1] Within this broader project, it entails the investigation and theorisation of collective agents of urban change - urban social movements - in a variety of social and cultural contexts. In his theoretical synthesis presented in Part 6 of the book, the hypotheses, theoretical assumptions and research findings are articulated together in an effort to satisfy these goals. This section of my deconstructive reading of the text will follow the path of his theoretical elaboration by beginning with the preliminary presuppositions and definitions which underpin the argument.

Theses on urban and social change

Castells begins his exposition by outlining what he means by cities and by setting out the mechanisms through which cities are transformed. Without repeating the complex debates about the definition of the urban (a debate with a long genealogy in the urban sociological tradition effectively reactivated by Castells' own earlier writings), Castells brings together his understanding of the city and his conception of urban social change. The two aspects, which constituted something of a dualism in his earlier work ("the city of capital" or "the city of class struggle"), are articulated by the privileging of the historical dimension. Moreover, and this is essential for my interpretation of his later writings and the overall genealogical trajectory of his work, the hermeneutic component of these definitions is also stressed. The emphasis on the meaning and significance of the urban in opposition to the previous debates about urban space, whether defined by reference to some externally given reality or couched within the language of a

structurally determined form, marks a decisive shift in the paradigmatic assumptions of Castells' new theory.

"Cities", as he puts it, "like all social reality, are historical products, not only in their physical materiality but in their cultural meaning, in the role they play in the social organisation, and in peoples' lives."[2] This twin emphasis on a historical and hermeneutic understanding of the urban is reinforced in his theses concerning urban social change. As he puts it:

> The basic dimension in urban change is the conflictive debate between social classes and historical actors over the meaning of the urban, the significance of spatial forms in the social structure, and the content, hierarchy, and destiny of cities in relation to the entire social structure. A city (and each type of city) is what a historical society decides the city (and each city) will be. Urban is the social meaning assigned to a particular spatial form by a historically defined society.[3]

The prioritising of temporality, political contestation and meaning in contradistinction to spatiality, economic structure and abstract form, is reflected in his understanding of the basic determinants and dynamics of the urban.

In the first place, Castells argues that the basic material elements of the city - urban meaning, urban function and urban form - are shaped by fundamental political and social conflicts. This is in keeping with his general thesis that society is "a structured, conflictive reality in which social classes oppose each other over the basic rules of social organisation according to their own interests."[4] These more general conflicts are specified and condensed in particular urban situations. In this regard the basic urban historical actors involved in the production of cities are urban social movements which Castells defines as "collective conscious action(s) aimed at the transformation of the institutionalised urban meaning against the logic, interest and values of the dominant class."[5] Though within the urban realm these grassroots mobilisations are conceded a structural privilege, Castells argues that viewed more broadly major innovation in urban meaning can emerge on a societal level as well. Here he includes the dominant and dominated

social classes and the impact of broader social movements not necessarily rooted in the urban domain.[6]

Moreover, of the various conflictual processes which structure the urban, Castells privileges the dimension of urban meaning. In other words, with regard to the production of urban forms, functions and meanings, the structural role produced by and through conflict over urban meaning conditions the other aspects of the urban. Even more fundamental than this, though, is the process of urban change which, by constituting urban meaning, conditions all aspects of what Castells calls "urban praxis".[7] In conclusion, it might be said that the notions of urban meaning and urban social change - the hermeneutic and temporal dimensions - are conceded what Heidegger might call an ontological, rather than an ontic, role in the overall structure of his later theory.[8]

This twin emphasis on change and meaning, which represents a major shift in Castells' conception of urban sociology, is, as I have argued in Part 1, a function of the failure of Marxist structuralism to provide a coherent framework for the investigation of social change. In particular, this failure was manifest in the explanation of the role of social movements in bringing about political transformations. Castells' search for a more adequate theoretical framework leads him to consider other sources of inspiration and understanding. The primary source remains, what Castells calls, "the glorious ruins of the Marxist tradition",[9] but includes the articulation of certain currents in the American sociological tradition and, perhaps the most important non-Marxist influence on Castells' later writings, Touraine's conceptualisation of social movements in "post-industrial societies".[10]

In his deconstructive reading of Marxism, Castells focuses on a dualism which goes to the centre of the Marxist tradition: the relationship between the structural and class based readings of the materialist dialectic. The basic tension between a theory of the necessary logic of modes of production and a conception of the contingent, historical and political logic of historical change, proves

a productive ambiguity in Castells' effort to think the specificity of political and social action. The effort to draw out the more action-based side of Marxism is complemented by the other elements in his theoretical synthesis. In particular, Touraine's effort to outline a sociological category of action to explain political subjectivity, as well as the historically and contextually specific emergence of autonomous and self-conscious social movements, is strongly registered in Castells' later project.[11] Moreover, Castells articulates many of the arguments surrounding the notion of "post-industrial society" - the shift from the old industrial mode of production to a more information and knowledge based society - as well as the centrality of civil society for new social movements in the face of an increasingly authoritarian and potentially all-encompassing state.[12]

Drawing on these traditions of analysis, Castells sets out to sketch out a different conception of urban change. The first step is to situate the process of urban change in the context of the broader trajectories of social and historical transformation. In this sense, struggles and debates over the constitution of urban meaning condense and specify the more general logics in a unique and particular fashion.[13] This initial displacement of the problem still begs the question of historical change. Here Castells dispenses with his previous notion of history as being endowed with a logical and teleological structure: "History has no direction, it only has life and death."[14] And change refers simply to new assignations of social and political meaning, not a mere contingency in the unfolding of some grand narrative. In this way, Castells abandons the notion of a comprehensive theory of history, and valorises the role of political antagonisms and struggles for hegemony, to understand social phenomena.

Again, in his elaboration of historical change, the idea of politics and the constitution of meaning are accorded an ontological position. But this is not to say that Castells gives in to a conception of historical change which is structured around the undetermined and arbitrary conflicts between historical actors. These struggles and processes are made dependent on the structure of the social and on a

society's particular mode of historical development. At this point, Castells proceeds to explicate a series of abstract logics with which to make sense of, as he puts it, the "development of most historical societies".[15] Here he specifies three key relationships pertaining to production, experience and power which he sees as constitutive of all human processes. The macro-theoretical logics which he then outlines develop an understanding of these three logics.

Taken as a whole, Castells' macro-theoretical notion of historical change touches on a number of key relations operative in contemporary societies. There are, however, some important methodological and substantive questions which need to be examined if these logics are to prove helpful. The most general question which is raised by Castells' theory of history centres on the degree to which he has given up what might be called his transcendental project to explain and understand social phenomena. In other words, this takes us back to the problem we outlined with regard to Castells' early writings: what would be the validity of any general theories of social and political change? The problem may be formulated in a more precise way. How are we to express the relation between abstract concepts and logics of historical change, on the one hand, and the concrete situations you are trying to explain on the other, without either giving into a naive empiricism of the elements, in which everything is absolutely different and unique, or subsuming the particular under the general?

With regard to these questions, Castells' later work is not clear. He has clearly broken with a teleological and structural conception of historical change characteristic of his earlier writings. When it comes to thinking the relation between his abstract system of historical logics and the more empirical concrete situations, however, there are few indicators as to how this resolves the problems we have outlined earlier. Though he argues that the categories he outlines are characteristic of all human societies and that their deployment would help us to understand "the development of most historical societies",[16] he also maintains that "their combination in a particular society was always unique, as was their timing, struggles and, therefore, the

historical actors who emerged in each society or regional set of societies to create and impose a new mode of production."[17] These remarks are repeated when Castells discusses his use of the categories of mode of production and social formations.

Though I am in basic agreement with his attempt to dispense with "modes of production in general", as well as his effort to replace the notion of social formation with the idea of unique and specific historical experiences, the whole argumentation begs a vital question. What is the status of his abstract categories and what is the theoretical relation between the abstract and the concrete? The answer which Castells provides both for his understanding of urban social change and urban social movements, namely, the idea that at a high level of generalisation there are elements common to all particular societies and what matters is the particular combination of these elements, does not provide an answer to the dilemma and presents a methodological solution which has more than a passing resemblance to his earlier structuralist methodology.[18] This problem is repeated in his discussion of cultures, nations and states. While providing a useful backdrop to certain social and cultural dimensions in the contemporary world, and their potentially contradictory logics, it still begs the question as to whether we can have a general theory of the formation of states, nations and so on. Recent arguments in these fields would tend in the opposite direction.[19]

How then to develop theoretical concepts and logics without recourse to the transcendental approach characteristic of many general theories of social and political phenomena? What other alternatives are available to steer a precarious course between the Scylla of empiricism and the Charybdis of theoreticism and formalism? In this regard, contemporary currents in post-analytical philosophy, exemplified by the writings of Rorty and Wittgenstein, and in the efforts made by thinkers such as Derrida and Vattimo to deconstruct and weaken the discourse of Western metaphysics, prove useful in social and political analysis.[20] They propose a movement away from the development of fully constituted categories, applicable to a universal and general set of situations, to

the construction of relatively "empty" and formal categories which may be "stretched" and "deformed" in their application to a variety of different historical and political contexts.

Thus there would be a search for categories which would allow for a multiplicity of derivations and empirical possibilities - sharing perhaps what Wittgenstein has called "family resemblances" - rather than tightly specified logics with precise movements from the abstract to the concrete.[21] It is this tendency which Vatimo has captured with his notions of il pensiero debole - "the weakness of thinking" - and a "weak ontology", in which an attempt is made to historicise and relativise the metaphysics of structuralism, humanism and modernity.[22] It is only through the construction of "quasi-transcendental" syntheses, logics which though not determining can still function in a more general way in elucidating particular phenomena, that one can make retroactive sense of Marx's famous dictum that the concrete can be understood as the synthesis of many determinations. Our only qualification would be to do away with the notion of dialectical mediation between the abstract and the concrete, and replace it with a notion of theoretical articulation. Jessop, for example, has moved in this direction, but still retains a problematic committment to scientific realism.[23]

These ideas are seemingly implicit in the distinction Castells draws between the abstract raw materials of history and their articulation in particular "cross-cultural contexts", but this is ultimately negated in that the categories of production, power and experience are conceded particular contents prior to their specification in different situations. In other words, the necessary distinction between purely formal categories and their substantive content, as well as the deconstruction of these formal categories, remains to be executed. Castells' more concrete determinations - the typology of modes of production and development, the nation-state and the state-nation and so forth - could become more useful once they have been deconstructed and used in tandem with more open-ended, weakened logics of political analysis. These would include the category of structure, the political, power and subjectivity. In this way, Castells' concepts would become

contingent and partial attempts to theorize particular aspects of the social. Their logics would have to be amenable to change and modification in each instance of their application. These theses, and my more substantive critique of Castells' theory of historical change, will be developed in the next sections of this chapter.

Another problem with Castells' general theory of historical change is its "eclecticism". Now, given my remarks on the need for a more open-ended approach to the construction of general theory, this may seem a misplaced criticism. However, talk of deconstruction, "weak thinking" and pragmatism need not result in the wholesale abandonment of theoretical rigour. On the contrary, the failure of simple logics to exhaust our understanding of social and political relations requires a more sophisticated approach to social phenomena. The clear advance in Castells new approach to historical change is the introduction of themes and categories which were excluded from the more simplistic acccount of history provided in his earlier writings. Hence his analysis of production relations is extended to include the concept of mode of development, while his incorporation of the additional dimensions of power, state and nation as relatively independent variables of historical explanation, and his introduction of the notions of experience and gender relations, broaden his previously one-dimensional approach. The difficulty, however, concerns the relations between these different aspects of the social. In fact, at first reading one might discern a new more developed regionalism in Castells synthesis: instead of the three Althusserian levels of the economic, the political and the ideological, one has the realms of production, the state and power, and the experiential. Again this poses the problem of the type of unity between the different logics of history as they are condensed in particular social formations and historical blocs. One line of thought in Castells' text is to place these logics at different levels of analysis: production on the international level; state and power confined to the nation-state; and experience related to the more localised social movements as part of a more open and innovative civil society. But again we are presented with a disaggregation, rather than a deconstruction and rearticulation, of different elements.

Both these problems – the theoretical relation between the abstract and the concrete, and the substantive question of an eclectic regionalism – pose the question of structure in all its complexity. At the deepest theoretical level, it poses the question of the relationship between structures and their possible transformation. In more substantive terms, it raises the problem of the identity and unity of social configurations – the relations within and outside of these blocs – without recourse to objective and fully constituted logics. In keeping with the ideas of post-analytical philosophy and the deconstruction of Western metaphysics, it is possible to outline a different concept of structure. This would be the idea of what Derrida has called a decentred structure or, as I have shown, a structure without closure which is always open to other possibilities. In a series of philosophical readings, Derrida has demonstrated that the search for fixity and fullness in the Western tradition is essentially dependent on a constitutive exterior which is both the centre's condition of possibility and impossibility.[24]

The undecidability of any given structure, premised as it is on the exclusion and retention of a relationship to the other, can be generalised and used to radicalise the Gramscian notion of historical bloc. Gramsci's notion of a historical bloc was developed to circumvent the crude economic determinism of the base-superstructural model of social relations.[25] The idea of an integral bloc of forces, welded together politically by an organic ideology, attempted to weaken a sharp and deterministic division between the economic base and the ideological and political superstructures. As Gramsci puts it, "Structures and superstructures form an historical bloc. That is to say, the complex, contradictory and discordant ensemble of the superstructures is the reflection of the ensemble of the social relations of production."[26] The notion of a historical bloc also presupposed the constitutive exclusion of other political forces as a condition of the unity of a given social configuration.[27] Moreover, Gramsci replaced the narrow Marxian notion of civil society – for Marx, the "anatomy of political economy" – and expanded it to include all the apparatuses of political and social life external to the narrowly defined state institutions such as churches,

schools, the family, trade unions, political parties, and so forth. In the more advanced conditions of Western Europe it was this terrain of struggle - the trenches of civil society - that was to be decisive in the winning of hegemony for the popular classes.[28]

Though this represented a decisive shift in the Marxist conception of social formation, Gramsci retained the idea of a fundamental social class. Each and every historical bloc was still organised around the political and economic interests of a fundamental social class. This idea can be further deconstructed if we reject any universal and ahistorical foundations of social formations, and extend Gramsci's notion of historical bloc to include all efforts to weld together, through a process of hegemonic articulation, social, political and economic elements which have no necessary principle of unity. To do so, would be to retain the notion of a primordial moment of political exclusion/inclusion - an exercise of political power and force - as the "founding" moment and condition of any social order. The drawing of political frontiers which include and exclude, and their fixation around relatively "sedimented" discourses, would represent the essential object of any political project.[29] These metaphors of the social would be analogous to Derrida's insistence on force, violence and exclusion as the founding moment of any discourse of identity or objectivity.[30] This notion of primordial force - its radical undecidability at the moment of constitution - will be used to elaborate the relationship between subject, antagonism and structure.

We turn now to the contemporary significance of urban social movements which represents the concrete object of investigation in The City and the Grassroots: Castells' theorization of the emergence and the contemporary significance of urban social movements. The first step in this theorization consists of his specification of the general theory of historical change in order to explain the contemporary relationship between space and society. Reminiscent of his methodological procedure in The Urban Question, he sets out the particular spatial expression of the new historical logics. This represents a precursory stage in his

effort to explain the emergence and significance of urban social movements.

The contemporary relationships between space and society

Castells' description of recent transformations in spatial logics and forms suggest a dramatic restructuring in the production of urban meaning in late capitalist societies. He argues that the reproduction and expansion of the capitalist mode of production, alongside the emergence of the industrial mode of development, has produced a crisis of the urban. The concentration of the means of production, the specialisation of spatial location in line with the interest of capital, the commodification of the city itself and the constant need to "de-" and "re-" urbanise the workforce, has resulted in a deepening crisis in the basic conditions of urban existence, and a politicization of all facets of urban life. This is manifest in the emergence of urban political movements.[31]

In response to the growing crisis of capital accumulation and political management, the dominant classes, according to Castells, have responded by creating a new set of conditions for the regulation of capitalist social relations. In particular, he argues, this has involved massive technological innovation in the spheres of production and consumption. As he shows in greater detail in his latest books, particularly The Informational City, this new system of production has involved the revolutionary deployment of new communications systems and micro-electronics to increase greater control over labour forces and to increase production.[32] This has resulted in the emergence of what he calls a new mode of development - the informational mode of development - which has created new conditions for capital accumulation through a major restructuring of spatial forms. The spatial impact of this new mode of development has been the transformation of places into flows and channels, and has set about delocalising the processes of production and consumption. This tendency toward despatialisation of social processes has certain limits which reflect the tension between the previous industrial and the emergent informational mode of development.[33] For

Castells this tension at the heart of the new dominant urban meaning results in the separation between people and previously sedimented spatial forms. Therefore, as he puts it, "the new urban meaning of the dominant class is the absence of any meaning based on experience...[that is]...the new tendential urban meaning is the spatial separation of people from their product and from their history."[34]

Given the ontological centrality of contestation in the later Castells' argument, he argues that this new logic is being challenged at each point by newly emerging social actors who propose a new urban meaning.[35] Here Castells indicates six axes of contestation between the dominant and challenging conceptions of urban meaning. These six loci of contestation condense the broader historical logics he has outlined in relation to the city. There is resistance from neighbourhoods and regional cultures which are threatened by the new processes. There is opposition from rural populations forced into the cities as a result of increasing capitalization of agriculture. The growing monopolisation of communication systems is challenged by attempts to construct alternative, locally-based information networks. The commodification of the city is met by citizens movements who struggle for the democratic provision of collective goods and services. The exploitation of ethnic and racial cleavages is challenged by the emergence of new political discourses articulated around ethnic identities and alternative cultural experiences. The centralization of power in increasingly authoritarian states lead to the emergence of new social movements which have expanded and used the space of civil society to express their political will.[36]

Many of the tendencies which Castells refers to in his analysis of contemporary capitalism accords with a number of other currents of analysis. By articulating certain Gramscian and Althusserian concepts, the "French Regulation School" have described a generalised crisis of "Fordism".[37] According to their analyses, "Fordism" emerged as a stable regime of accumulation and mode of regulation in advanced industrial societies during the post-war period.[38] This particular form of historical bloc, which made possible the characteristic patterns of economic growth and political stability in the post-war period, entered

into crisis during the 1970s and 1980s as the accepted institutional parameters were no longer able to sustain the demands which were placed on them.[39] This organic crisis of Fordism was particularly evident in the widespread and sustained attack on the social democratic consensus and on one of its principal institutional expressions: the Welfare State.[40]

In economic terms, the dislocatory effects of the crisis of "Fordism" has resulted in a search for new forms of capital accumulation. The movement to flexible specialisation and an increasing globalisation of capitalist relations, which some see as the basis for a new "post-Fordist" regime, is one strategic response to the crisis of late capitalism, and supports Castells' arguments about the increasing "de-spatialisation" of social relations.[41] This is backed up by Claus Offe, Scott Lash and John Urry who have described a generalised shift from organised to disorganised capitalism as the major condition of our time.[42] These authors have pointed to the breakdown of the once stable system of capitalist development as it emerged during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in countries such as the United States and Germany, and have examined the effects of this transformation. Their conclusions add weight to Castells' conclusions as they too have pointed to the deconcentration and dispersal of the old industrial mode of production, the growing internationalisation of capitalist relations, and the concommitant decline and diversification of the old urban and spatial centres.[43]

From our point of view, perhaps the most important writing in this regard has been the series of interventions by the Marxist urban geographer David Harvey. In a number of books, Harvey has attempted to account for the particular role of space in the production and reproduction of capitalist relations.[44] More recently, in his book The Condition of Post-Modernity, he has attempted to synthesise the main arguments which have attempted to explain the crisis of "Fordism/organised capitalism", and theorise the transition to a system of flexible and global accumulation.[45] His somewhat eclectic appraisal of these tendencies moves in precisely the same direction as Castells'

analyses, but there is an important difference which separates out the two approaches. This hinges on the all-important political consequences of these global economic and structural transformations.

To some extent, this reflects their different objects of investigation. Harvey's analyses are almost solely concerned with the structural relationship between space and capital accumulation, whereas Castells, at least in The City and the Grassroots, is clearly concerned with the emergence of resistance and popular protest. However, at a deeper level, there are important divergences to note. For Harvey, the political implications of the present crisis are read retroactively in terms of an imaginary more appropriate to the Fordist and organised forms of capitalism.[46] Social protest is conceded a reactive role in relation to the growing dislocations of the current crisis.[47] For Castells, on the other hand, social movements can be proactive, that is, they can develop new forms of resistance, strategies and discourses in response to the challenges and dislocations of their lives. In Castells' interpretation, this reflects a far more radical notion of dislocation. Whereas Harvey still harkens back to traditional forms of resistance within old social and political imaginaries, Castells views the new dislocations as moments of pure possibility to be interpreted and read in a variety of creative and proactive ways. Whereas Harvey restricts his observations to the role of the traditional working classes and their forms of organisation such as trade unions, Castells has expanded the horizon of resistance discourses to include, as central elements, the new social movements and their qualitatively different discourses and styles of operation. One might say that whereas Castells tries to think a radical discontinuity between the two phases, Harvey's analysis still subsumes the radical implications and processes under some broader notion of continuity.[48]

The central difficulty in Castells' account of these new forms of political action remains, however, his explanation of their emergence, their character and their contemporary significance. It is my contention that though providing a relatively coherent analysis of the historical logics underpinning the formation of contemporary urban social

movements, his theory still lacks an understanding of the political or "subjective" variables of collective action. While it is true to say that these are above all historical and contextual matters to be discussed in relation to each particular case, it does not mean that we can dispense with some open ended general logics to help explain these processes. Failure to do this, could lead to an empiricism of the particular in which it is assumed that it is possible to have an unmediated access to a given object or set of processes. Instead, as I have argued earlier, we require a set of theoretical logics which can inform our understanding of specific processes and objects while not exhausting their meaning in a pre-given form.

The emergence, character and significance of urban social movements

In his discussion of urban social movements, we should remember that Castells is primarily concerned with the relationship between grassroots mobilisations and the production of urban social change. Many critiques of The City and the Grassroots might well be themselves criticised for expecting too much of Castells' conclusions about the character and significance of urban social movements.[49] He is not trying to provide a general explanation for the emergence of all forms of urban protest, but trying rather to set out the conditions under which urban protest movements might bring about changes in urban meaning and form. Bearing this in mind, it is nevertheless true to say that Castells' analyses also contribute to a more general theory of collective political action and, in particular, to the explanation of the "new social movements". Moreover, while accepting his more modest object of investigation, there is no denying that Castells sets out a general theory of social and historical change, as well as a global assessment of spatial logics in late capitalism, in order to make sense of the specificity of urban social movements.

Castells' theoretical constructs and empirical case studies lead him to define urban social movements in terms of three basic goals which are consciously acted upon by the movements themselves. Each of these objectives opposes a particular logic which is attempting to structure

the meaning of a particular urban context. Thus each goal isolates an adversary which both structures and defines the movement in question. The three demands for collective consumption, community culture, and political self-management set urban movements on a collision course with the dominant structural logics operating in contemporary societies. When these three goals are articulated together in a conscious fashion, and if the movement remains structurally independent from political parties, then the maximum transformation of urban meaning is likely to occur. Castells calls this particular instance of urban organisation an urban social movement.[50]

The emergence of urban social movements, and urban struggles more broadly are explained, therefore, by reference to the generalised structural logics which they oppose and by certain subjective prerequisites internal to the movements themselves. This is because they condense an opposition to the dominant institutionalised practices and because the other avenues of social protest - trade unions, political parties and so forth - are no longer the primary sources of innovation and social transformation. This does not mean, however, that urban social movements have become the new sources of global transformation in contemporary societies. Though urban social movements have, according to Castells, come to play a disproportionate social role in contemporary societies, this is a reflection of the failure of people to identify the real loci of oppression in contemporary society. This leads them to react to one of the more fundamental mainsprings of their experience: the city. Without other channels of political expression to identify the real logics of domination, more localised and community-based struggles become the only means of political mobilisation and change. This means that urban social movements, while responding to the major dislocations of the time, are principally reactive utopias aiming at the change of their local communities, rather than proactive agents of universal social change.

One of the main theoretical difficulties arising out of Castells' new account of urban social movements still concerns his explanation for their emergence. While his analysis identifies a plurality of structural

logics underpinning their emergence, as well as a far more sophisticated account of their internal, subjective conditions of possibility, it is not clear whether the structuralism of his previous paradigm has been completely deconstructed. While he correctly stresses the historicity and contextuality of each urban struggle, there is still no attempt to theorise the conditions under which antagonistic relations develop.

The arguments presented in City and the Grassroots do, at certain stages, point in a direction from where it would be possible to think the specificity and implications of this relation. Two passages in Castells' discussion of contemporary spatial restructuring are of particular relevance here. As he puts it:

> Yet this is not the spatial form to emerge or the urban meaning to be imposed without resistance by the new dominant class, because spaces and cities, as well as history, are not the products of the will and interests of the dominant classes, genders, and apparatuses, but, the result of a process in which they are resisted by dominated classes, genders and subjects, and in which they are met by alternative projects of new, emerging social actors.[51]

> Each spatial restructuring attempted by the new, dominant class, each urban meaning being defined by the capitalists, managers and technocrats is being met by conflicting projects of urban meaning, functions, and forms, coming from a variety of social actors...some movements are reactive, while others are proactive by proposing new relationships between space and society.[52]

Almost all the ingredients necessary for an adequate theorization of antagonistic relations are present here. The logic of spatial restructuring presented by Castells is reminiscent of Foucault's relational analytic of power. Foucault argues for a dialectic of power and resistance, that is, any act of power necessarily implies an act of resistance.[53] In other words, the action of restructuring can be seen as a fundamental instance of power or exclusion which implies an act of resistance by those affected by the spatial restructuring. This also presupposes a further condition for the emergence of an antagonism: the dislocation of the structure. In other words, the dislocatory effects of the contemporary logics of late capitalism opens the possibility of a multiplicity of antagonistic relations between dominant and dominated projects of urban meaning.[54]

However, two further crucial linkages need to be specified for an adequate theorization of antagonisms and the formation of political subjectivity. The missing ingredient with regard to the former concerns the category of negativity or threat. While Castells specifies the necessary "objective", structural conditions for the emergence of political antagonism, he does not specify the "subjective" conditions. If dislocation and exclusion - presupposing as it does the constitutive undecidability of the structure - are to be reacted upon by subjects, then their identity has to be threatened. For this identity to be threatened the subject must be constituted around a set of meanings which are negated by the new logics. Moreover, for the dislocation to be constructed in an antagonistic fashion, another discourse must be made available to oppose the new logics which threaten the subject. Both these discursive conditions of possibility are necessary if an antagonism is to emerge.[55] In other words, the formation of political subjectivity in response to the dislocatory effects of spatial restructuring, for example, are in no way automatic structural responses. They are dependent on the availability of discourses and political imaginaries which are able to interpret and condense dislocations into antagonistic relations and perhaps into alternative discursive practices.[56]

The theorization of negativity addresses to some extent the connection between dislocations and the emergence of antagonisms. The question of political subjectivity still needs to be examined in more depth. The question of subjectivity in The City and the Grassroots represents a fundamental advance over Castells' previous conceptions of the structure-agency dichotomy. In the first instance, the subject is not assumed to be in an a priori fashion a class subject. Urban social movements, for example, are explicitly not class based movements which can be subsumed under the overall class struggle. As he puts it, urban social movements:

> are not middle class but multi-class movements for the very simple reason that they do not relate directly to the relationships of production, but to the relationships of consumption, communications and power.[57]

In this sense, therefore, subjects are not explicable by reference to a

pre-determined structure. Their character is understood in terms of the conscious demands and identities articulated by the movements themselves. In this regard, Castells follows Touraine's teaching that societies are essentially "self-produced" in and through reflexive collective social action. Thus Castells' theorization parallels Touraine's definition of urban social movements as "the organised collective behaviour of a class actor struggling against his class adversary for the social control of historicity in a concrete community."[58]

Thus there are the two important advantages of Castells' later paradigm: firstly, the deconstruction of any fixed identity between structure and political identity and, secondly, the radical contextualization and historicization of the process of subject formation. There still remains, however, some important problems with his conception of subjectivity. These concern, firstly, the emergence of political subjectivity and the ubiquitous structure-agency dilemma and, secondly, the relationship between different political subject positions. With regard to the former, and as I argued in my discussion about the specificity of antagonisms, it is still not clear in Castells later work how to theorise the agency of political subjects. As I have shown in my genealogy of Castells' writings, the precise theoretical relationship between structures and political practices has occupied a central place in his work. The dualistic conception in The Urban Question gave way to an attempt to elaborate a relation between the two levels in City, Class and Power, whereas in The City and the Grassroots the dualism is to some extent dissolved with his emphasis on conscious collective action and the ontological centrality of political struggle. These theses are given further credence when Castells stresses the unfinished quality of history and urban meaning as constitutive of social and historical change. However, these premises still lack an explicit theoretical articulation of these notions. Once again they provide some of the conditions for explaining the relationship without actually producing theoretically the linkages themselves.

The starting point for rethinking the structure-agency problem must be the recognition that neither the structure nor the subject are fully-constituted entities. To posit "full" entities in this regard would make a relationship between the two superfluous for we would be faced with two positive identities with their own particular logics and conditions of existence. In this sense, the subject and the structure would remain opposed to one another. Rejecting this starting point, and recognising a lack in the structure of the subject and the object, provides us with the essential preconditions for deconstructing this dichotomy. As I have suggested, Castells' notion of history, and more specifically the urban, as unfinished political products, points precisely in this direction. What Derrida has called the "undecidability of the structure" theorises this constitutively incomplete logic in a more rigorous fashion. As I have argued in Chapter 6, his readings of Western metaphysics have been concerned to show the impossibility of fully constituted objects of analysis. Hence his reinscribed notion of "supplementarity", for example, which emerged in his deconstructive reading of Rousseau, posits an originary lack in Rousseau's text as its essential condition of possibility. Moreover, as he has shown, this generalised ambiguity of the structure shows itself in the undecidability of the subject as well.[59]

What then are the conditions for this constitutive undecidability to show itself, and how does the political subject emerge? These questions can be answered by reference to the above discussion on dislocation and antagonism. As Castells has argued, the contemporary logics of contemporary capitalism and their effects on the relationship between society and spatial form, point to the increasing dislocation of the spatial structure. It is in precisely these conditions that the lack and unfinished quality of the subject is manifested, and it is this failure of the system which makes possible the agency of the subject. That is to say, the failure of previously constituted structures to "hold the subject together" - the revelation of textual limits, as Derrida or Heidegger might put it - forces a subject to emerge and reconstruct the structure. This allows us to adumbrate a relationship between structure and the emergence of political subjectivity without reducing one to the

other. The increasing dislocations in the structure force the subject to act, but these decisions are in no way determined by the structure itself because whether these decisions are constructed in an antagonistic fashion depends on the discourses which "fill" the gap opened by the dislocations. As I have shown in the comparison between Castells and Harvey, the former's notion of crises or dislocations of a given configuration also open up possibilities and spaces of freedom in that they force a subject to emerge and act in a new situation which cannot be understood against the backdrop of previously articulated practices.[60]

The second remaining problem with Castells' theory of the subject in The City and the Grassroots will be discussed in relation to Castells' understanding of the contemporary significance of urban political struggles. This concerns the one-dimensionality and dispersion of subject positions in Castells' writings. While an initial historicization and contextualization of the subject marks an essential stage in the deconstruction of a Marxist notion of political identification, it is not a sufficient condition. To remain at this stage would be to assume that subject positions are necessarily separate entities. This would be to suggest that there is no possibility of an articulation between different subject positions, and it would restrict the logic of political contestation to singular resistances against a defined enemy. On the one hand, this conception leads Castells to argue that urban social movements are not class struggles because they are constructed around a distinctively urban identity. On the other hand, however, it precludes an articulation between urban struggles and other struggles; a possibility in which an overdetermination, to use Althusser's category, between subject positions could be constructed in tandem with a relative autonomy of the constituent identities.[61]

It is this logic which underpins Castells' pessimistic reading of the contemporary significance of urban social movements. For Castells, urban social movements, while correctly opposing the general logics of the new structuration of society, and containing the traces of an alternative political project, are necessarily reactive and inward-

looking "utopian discourses". In this regard, he fails to develop the hegemonic logics which were outlined in his "middle" writings on the meaning and strategic importance of urban political struggles.

This pessimism is also the function of other doubtful methodological and substantive aspects of Castells' theorization of urban social movements. It stems from the restrictive set of conditions which have to be satisfied if urban movements are to become urban social movements. It also reflects the global criteria against which Castells measures the effectiveness of urban social movements. Though Castells' interpretation of urban social movements is the product of a sophisticated macro-theoretical account of social change, as well as the "verification" of these theses in a detailed set of cross-cultural case studies, there is a strong prescriptive dimension in his definition of urban social movements. In this sense, it could be argued that Castells' later approach to urban social movements still retains some of the hard claims of his earlier work, and that a greater degree of "weakening" of these stronger logics might be more useful in analysing urban collective actions.

As Lowe has suggested there is also the suspicion that Castells' criteria for the evaluation of urban struggles and, consequently, his theory of urban social change, rests on a post hoc rationalisation of the Madrid Citizen's Movement.[62] Does Castells' theory, in other words, rest too heavily on the generalisation from one particular case study? In Castells' defence it might be argued that this forms an ideal type against which other phenomena can be evaluated. However, this leaves the question of Castells' contextualization and relativisation of urban social change in some doubt. If the Madrid Movement is raised to the level of an ideal type, it becomes an objective standard against which other political mobilisations and struggles are to be measured. This would suggest that Castells would still be using unacceptable structural criteria for judging the character and possible effects of urban social movements. His theory would thus tend toward a general theory of urban social movements and would be open to the criticisms which I outlined against general theories in Chapter 5. Once one sets down objective

conditions to characterise urban social movements, the contextual and historical conditions of each social situation become difficult to take into account. Castells' theory moves in the direction of setting out formal and substantive criteria across different spaces and times. Once this happens, the usefulness of categories becomes questionable.

Moreover, in outlining his particular conditions for the evaluation of urban social movements, Castells present something of a false dichotomy between the local and the global levels. Castells suggests that urban social movements can, at best, only hope to achieve urban social change. This reflects the historical failure of other more universal agents of change and the structural inability of urban agents effectively to transform their conditions of oppression. In other words, urban protest and urban social movements represent the displacement of antagonistic relations which are not directed at the true source of oppression. Castells puts in the following terms:

> Yet when people experience an undefined force they react on one of several levels against the material form that transforms to them the force they feel. Thus the less people identify the source of their economic exploitation, cultural alienation, and political oppression while still feeling their effects, the more they will react against the material forms [that is, urban forms (D.H.)] that introduce these experiences into their lives.[63]

This displacement of the "real" antagonism means that urban protest is necessarily reactive and localised.

This thesis reflects Castells' claim that urban political movements are incapable of transforming the global situation and is premised on the acceptance of a universal structure against which protests can be measured, and against a conception of political subjectivity which refuses to allow the possibility of an articulation of different forms of struggle. If one suspends the notion of a fully constituted structure in the first place, there is no reason to believe that urban social movements cannot have an effect on discursive configurations wider than the "urban" or that they cannot be articulated into broader hegemonic projects so as to bring about wider social change. Castells' refusal to contemplate this possibility is a function of his inadequate conception of political subjectivity and his failure to outline a conception of

politics and hegemony. These considerations would enable Castells' theoretical framework to account for the possibility of overdetermined subjectivities and identities which could both challenge locally based oppressions and more generalised political, cultural and economic domination.

In this chapter, I have attempted to evaluate and deepen some of the advances which I believe Castells' later texts on urban politics, particularly The City and the Grassroots, represent. Apart from certain methodological and epistemological arguments which I put forward in this regard, I have been most concerned to develop some of the political logics which I argue are absent from Castells' theorization. Here I have articulated categories such as dislocation, negativity, antagonism and political subjectivity to supplement Castells' otherwise suggestive and persuasive theory of urban social movements. In doing so, I have gleaned these logics and concepts from certain Althusserian and post-Althusserian accounts of the social. In the following chapter I will draw out the main arguments which have been presented in this dissertation by articulating my conclusions to the central problematizations which have been tackled in the course of this work.

Conclusions

In my critical analysis of Castells' writings, I have been concerned with three problems. Firstly, to trace out, evaluate and build upon Castells' efforts to construct a viable and useful urban political research programme. Secondly, to examine the implications of Castells' work for developments within and beyond the Marxist theoretical framework. Thirdly, to investigate the way in which Castells' analyses of urban politics might inform contemporary debates about the new social movements, the contemporary articulation between space and society and the "post-modern". My examination of these themes has sought to draw a connection, and explore the relationship between the philosophical, substantive and concrete levels of Castells' investigations. The guiding argument in the dissertation has been the attempt to demonstrate the way in which Castells' work has changed from an essentialist – that is, Althusserian structuralist – account of urban political theory to a more pragmatic "political hermeneutics" of the urban. In tracing out this development, I have endeavoured to draw a connection between the shifts in Castells' writings and some broader intellectual tendencies which have questioned some of the key assumptions of modernity, and to show where I think Castells' later project is analogous to these post-modern gestures. Further, I have attempted to focus on those tendencies in his work where a residual modernity can still be traced. I have also tried to critically assess and expand upon the themes which he has set out in his writings. To conclude, I shall set out the main conclusions which have emerged from my three basic problematics.

Castells and urban political research

One of the central features of Castells' different approaches to urban political theory is the interconnectedness of the various dimensions he explores. This relational account of philosophical, meta-substantive and concrete analysis forms an essential starting point for any viable research strategy. This is not to say that there is a unilinear determination of one level by another, but rather the recognition that

the philosophical assumptions of a research analytic inform the substantive and concrete propositions which are put forward. Another characteristic which runs through the corpus of Castells' writings is his problematization of the urban. In other words, he does not accept that our approach to the urban is unmediated, but has consistently endeavoured to set out the conditions under which an understanding of the urban is possible and useful. He points, therefore, to the need for an explicit account of the theoretical horizon which informs our analysis of urban questions. I take both these assumptions as essential prerequisites for any approach to urban political analysis. In the following paragraphs I will disaggregate the various themes Castells has delineated and provide a resume of the advantages and disadvantages of his work.

The clearest shift in Castells' work pertains to the philosophical procedures which he follows. In The Urban Question, Castells employs the rigid epistemological postulates of the Althusserian system and draws on the structuralist methodologies which had become dominant during the 1960s and early 1970s. His middle and later writings, in particular the detailed "Methodological Appendices" which he presents in The City and the Grassroots, move progressively toward a pragmatist position both in terms of his research strategies, which stress the need for a mutual reciprocity between the theoretical and the empirical, and in the way in which he constructs his theoretical syntheses. The ideas of science, truth and coherence give way to the language of experience, usefulness and adequacy. In these respects, I concur with Castells' rejection of normative epistemologies as a basis for analysing social reality. I also accept his more pragmatic methodology premised as it is on an ontology which recognises the essential incompleteness of history and social formations.

In Chapter 6 of this dissertation, I have attempted to provide an explicit theorization of the assumptions and conclusions entailed by these arguments. I have also attempted to extend the ideas which Castells has put forward in this regard. Crucial to this perspective is the problematization of the giveness or objectivity of reality, and the

acceptance of the constructed and contingent nature of social relations. In methodological terms, this requires a series of relay manoeuvres, as Deleuze has suggested, between our general concepts and logics, and the particular sets of processes under examination.[1] This procedure is premised on the fact that our theoretical categories are not comprehensive or "fully-fledged" entities, but open-ended and flexible enough to facilitate the investigation of phenomena without subsuming their form under an abstract law. As I have argued in Chapter 6, it does not mean that we give into an empiricism of the particular (everything is essentially different and not explicable by reference to theoretical discourses), nor need it imply a formal theoreticism, but rather a deconstruction of essentialist concepts and a more subtle understanding of the relation between the concrete and the abstract.

One of the key claims in all Castells' theorizations of the urban problematic has been his insistence that it is essential to place the analysis of the urban in a wider sociological and political context. Consequently, Castells has attempted produce a general set of substantive theoretical logics pertaining to social formations and the place of the urban within these general frameworks, before engaging in the concrete explanation of particular phenomena and social processes. This position is accepted as an essential precondition for the theorization of urban phenomena. Hence, as I have shown in this dissertation, the shifts in his work reflect to a large extent the changing theoretical conditions in which the urban is situated. Castells' early work is shaped predominantly by the Althusserian framework with its rigid and deterministic laws of history and society, whereas his middle and especially his later writings emphasise a more flexible and pluralistic set of meta-substantive logics.

In his early work, following Althusser, Castells presents a scientific and objective account of historical and social change with which to produce his concept of the urban, and with which to contextualize particular urban processes. This procedure always entails the danger that the more specific objects are subsumed under abstract laws of society. A recognition of this difficulty propels Castells to

adopt a more flexible and pragmatic stance with regard to substantive questions in his later writings. Thus, the later writings are opposed to absolute logics of the social which claim to exhaust the meaning of all objects. In its place he accepts the indeterminacy and openess of social reality, and limits his exposition of historical and social change to certain tendencies which can only be realised in concrete conjunctures. Moreover, his stress on the central importance of political contestation in the production of social change reinforces the contingency of social reality, that is, the inherent undecidability of historical processes. This move reflects the break with the absolute logics of history which are adopted in his earlier Althusserian phase, and the acceptance of a more pluralistic and eclectic account of society presented in his later writings. In the latter, he supplements some of the Marxist categories of history such as the mode of production and social formation with other logics and concepts pertaining to power, the state, ethnicity, culture and experience.

Once again this attempt to broaden the substantive theoretical context in which he locates the particularity of the urban represents a major step forward. But, as I have shown in Chapter 7, there are some difficulties with the approach and content of these substantive logics on history and society. On a methodological plane, the concepts and tendencies he presents are still too general and fully constituted. This jeopardizes a productive movement between the abstract and concrete. Moreover, the construction of his theoretical schema is somewhat eclectic and, therefore, smacks of a regional conception of historical change. In other words, while Castells incorporates the analysis of power, the state, culture and so on, in a non-reductionist fashion, he does not articulate these elements together in a rigorous fashion.

These tendencies can be more clearly appreciated if we examine his conception of politics in the later writings. Though Castells stresses the fact that social change and the production of historical meaning are constitutive of social formations, the substantive political logics pertaining to this dimension of society are not explored. Rather, we are presented with untheorized and unconnected conceptions of power, social

action and political structures such as the state and bureaucracy. Thus the theorization of the political is not addressed. As I have attempted to argue in Chapter 7, a deconstruction of the structure opens up the possibility of articulating a relation between social agency, political subjectivity and power. Starting from the undecidability of the structure, a more open-ended movement from general theoretical logics to particular empirical contexts is facilitated.

The dramatic change in Castells' theorization of the urban is symptomatic of the shifts in his writings as a whole. Put briefly, Castells has abandoned his structuralist conception of the urban as a spatial unit of collective consumption and articulated a hermeneutical account of the urban. This hermeneutics, as I have conceptualized it, focuses on the political construction of urban meaning as the fundamental object of urban political analysis. His change in perspective is aptly illustrated by reference to the transformation of the key concept of collective consumption. In his earlier writings, the category of collective consumption defined urban space in objective and structural terms, whereas in his later writings the concept refers to one of the main goals around which urban social movements are organised. Hence struggles for the provision of urban services and goods are still important for his understanding of urban politics, but this process has now been relativised and contextualized in a more pragmatic fashion. Thus the category co-exists with other demands and processes which structure the production of urban meaning in late capitalist societies. The essentialism of his early approach is effectively deconstructed by introducing other logics and by stressing the incomplete and contested discursive constitution of urban meaning.

Conceived of in this way, I accept Castells' transformed theorization of the urban as a necessary horizon for the analysis of urban politics. Examining the constitution of urban meaning through time opens up the possibility of a contextually specific account of particular urban movements and processes, and their relation with broader social change. This perspective also directs attention to the role of urban political movements themselves in the production of urban

meaning. Hence Castells recovers an agency-centred approach to the analysis of urban social struggle by focussing on the consciously articulated goals and identities of urban actors in specific historical situations. This is in marked contrast to the structurally determined account of urban politics presented in his early writings and which he tries, unsuccesfully, to avoid in his middle writings.

One important difficulty in his later writings concerns the restrictive set of goals which Castells presents as constitutive of urban social movements. There is some suspicion that these goals are derived from a too rapid generalization from the Madrid Citizen Movement and his wider conception of historical change. While the three goals he puts forward are useful in pinpointing urban political movements, it is problematic to suggest that these exhaust the determination of urban social movements. In doing so, Castells restricts unnecessarily the field of urban political analysis. In this regard, his earlier writings, particularly the theses presented in City, Class and Power, suggest a more developed notion of the political in that urban movements emerge and are shaped by wider political projects. This dimension of his analysis is not developed in the later writings where Castells tends to examine urban political struggles in isolation from other political movements and processes. These arguments will be examined in more detail in my assessment of urban movements and the new social movements.

Castells and the crisis of Marxist theory

Throughout this dissertation, I have emphasised Castells' relation to the Marxist theoretical tradition. This was most clear in his early and middle writings where Castells drew extensively on the writings of Althusser and Poulantzas, but it also informs his later writings where Castells still uses some basic Marxist categories to explain particular social processes. I stress this connection both because it is essential for any account of Castells' writings and because the shifts in Castells' approach reflect an attempt to transform Marxist theory into a more useful analytical framework. In this way, his work sheds light on developments in the tradition and in particular about the continuing

debates about Althusserianism and the so-called "post-Marxist" turn. These questions will be examined in this section.

At first glance, the trajectory of Castells' writings confirms the worst doubts about the Althusserian "revolution" in Marxist discourse. The entire shift in his theoretical position represents an attempt to break with Althusser's rigid epistemological and substantive approach. This is most clear when one examines Castells' changing philosophical stance for Castells is at pains to distance himself from the difficulties associated with "grand theory". Yet, at the same time, it is important to note that Castells never formally renounced many of the concepts which were produced by the Althusserian problematic. This is most evident in the subsequent history of the category of collective consumption. This concept is the linchpin of his early and middle writings and was articulated through the deployment of the Althusserian problematic to the study of space. Even so, this concept is still of central importance in accounting for the emergence and character of urban social movements in The City and the Grassroots. The main change which has taken place in this regard is the relativisation of the concept. Instead of constituting and exhausting the meaning of the urban in advanced capitalist societies, as is the case in his earlier work, in the later work it is one of the key objectives which defines an urban political movement. In this way, it is possible to supersede the problems with this category which I outlined in Chapter 5. Similar remarks could be made about the way Castells' uses the category of modes of production, social formation and social class in his later conception of historical change.

These remarks are useful for assessing the relation between Castells' writings and the so-called "post-Marxist" turn. Those who have advanced "post-Marxism" have not argued for a wholesale abandonment of the Marxist tradition, assuming one can even talk about a singular Marxist tradition, but have stressed the need to deconstruct some of the essentialist claims which are characteristic of the Marxist perspective. This has facilitated the exploration of contingent logics in Marxist textuality which are subsumed under the necessary laws of history. To

adopt a "post-Marxist" approach, therefore, requires the abandonment of an objectivist and universal horizon of investigation in which one set of logics exhausts the reality of political processes and the acceptance of a plurality of perspectives in a terrain of investigation. The key questions in a post-Marxist perspective would avoid a transcendental horizon of investigation, and focus on the historical conditions of possibility of phenomena.[2]

In this sense, Castells' later work tends to augment the arguments for a "post-Marxist" approach to society and history, and his work is indicative of the advantages to be gained by such a move. In The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City, Castells draws strongly on Marxist categories and insights, but this does not preclude his efforts to articulate other traditions of analysis both in the elaboration of his general approach to historical change and in the particular accounts of urban political struggle. Moreover, Castells' usages of these Marxist logics is pragmatic rather than dogmatic. Hence he is prepared to distort and modify Marxist logics if he believes that their intrinsic form precludes an effective elucidation of contemporary phenomena. Further, Castells is prepared to acknowledge aporias in the Marxist tradition itself. This is the case with his most immediate object of investigation: social movements. More specifically, he recognizes that Marxism has no theoretical place for the investigation of urban social movements, and social movements more generally, and has problems with the explanation of all forms of conscious collective action. Hence he must adumbrate logics which can be isolated in certain Marxist texts, and incorporate non-Marxist explanatory frameworks, to account for one of his principal objects of analysis. This practical attitude toward Marxism and other non-Marxist approaches epitomizes a post-Marxist stance, and indicates the productivity of breaking with essentialist Marxist accounts.

Castells and the experience of post-modernity

I will now turn to the concrete claims which Castells has elaborated with regard to the significance of urban social movements, the

contemporary articulation of space and society, and the debates
concerning the city and post-modernity which have underwritten parts of
this dissertation. I will be concerned with two interacting questions.
What have Castells' various theorizations and analyses to tell us about
the new social movements, the contemporary changes in society and the
intellectual debates which have suggested a break in the discourse of
modernity? And, to turn the question around, how do these changes and
conditions help us to explain the theoretical transformations and
concrete propositions he puts forward in The City and the Grassroots and
The Informational City.

Debates about the contemporary articulation of space and society
have focused on changes in the character of capitalism. On the one hand,
there has been a growing recognition that the stable forms of capital
accumulation characteristic of the post-war period, perhaps stretching
back to the emergence of organized capitalism at the beginning of the
century, began to disintegrate. Amongst these accounts, there has been
some dispute about the emergent forms of capitalism. Some have suggested
the possibility of "neo-Fordism", with an increased emphasis on
"flexible specialisation" and globalization", as the basis for a new
stable regime of accumulation. Others have detected a movement towards
"disorganized capitalism" as the new condition of capitalist
reproduction.[3] On the other hand, there are those who have stressed the
essential continuity in the development of capitalism and have disputed
the claims that there has been an important shift. From this
perspective, the shifts are nothing more than the cyclical crises of
capitalist relations and are not conceded any special significance.[4]

In this regard, Castells' analyses, particularly those presented in
The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City, point in the
direction of the first set of arguments. Moreover, his perspective adds
to these developments by focussing on the effects of these changes on
the urban and spatial level. Even in The Urban Question, Castells
focused on the changes in the processes of capital accumulation and the
international division of labour, and described an increasing
despatialisation of capitalist production. It was this tendency which

resulted in the increasing spatialisation of consumption processes as the defining feature of the urban in late capitalist societies. In his later work, these arguments are expanded upon and given a more rigorous theorization. In The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City, Castells argues that the crisis of space in advanced capitalist societies (and given the growing globalization of capitalism Third World societies as well), is explained by the contradiction between the industrial and the emergent informational mode of development. In this period of transition from a nationally based, organised and stable form of capitalist accumulation to a more global, flexible and dynamic system, there has been a rapid dislocation of urban spaces. In these respects Castells confirms and elaborates some of the arguments put forward by Offe, Lash, Urry, Aglietta and Lipietz, for example.[5]

It has been recognized widely that urban social movements form an integral part of those political forces which have been categorized as the "new social movements".[6] Castells himself draws attention to these social forces which emerged in the 1960s and, in particular in the aftermath of the 1968 revolts, as an important reference point for his accounts of urban politics.[7] For the most part, debate and discussion about the new social movements has not provided precise definitions of these movements and there has been some dispute about the political significance of these phenomena. Briefly, the idea of "new social movements" refers to an open-ended list of movements which include the feminist movement, the peace movement, the ecological and environmental movements, various forms of ethnic and sexual minorities, and so forth, which have emerged since the 1960s and 1970s in advanced industrial societies.[8] They do not have precise political identities, structures or organizational forms, but share a set of "family resemblances" in that they have tended to emerge and flourish in civil society, rather than advancing their interests through the state, and that they have distinguished themselves from the more traditional and institutionalized forms of interest mediation such as trade unions, pressure groups and political parties. Their style of politics has also differed from previous political forms. They tend to be more informal and anti-establishment, less concerned with direct attacks on state power or

formal representation in the system, and more interested in activities pertaining to the transformation of values and discourses.[9] Before addressing the ways in which Castells' analyses might inform our understanding of these new political agents, I shall begin by setting out some of the key interpretations of new social movements.

Not surprisingly there have been numerous attempts to explain the contemporary significance of these forces. For our purposes, there are three broad approaches to the analysis of new social movements: those who are favourably disposed to the significance of these movements, those who are negatively disposed or who feel that new social movements are at best secondary to more important forms of struggle and, finally, those who are agnostic about these political forms. I shall begin with those who are positively inclined.

There are a number of sympathetic accounts of new social movements. Some have argued that these forces are the new global agents of capitalist transformation. Hence Marcuse argues that these movements have effectively replaced the working class as the force which can transform the bourgeois order.[10] Others have argued that the new social movements are a continuation of the enlightenment project. Habermas, for example, argues that these forces represent an extension of the enlightenment values of rationality into new domains of the social and thus further the project of a progressive modernity.[11] Another set of analysts have argued that these movements are in the best position to challenge the power relations of increasingly "post-industrial societies". Touraine, for example, portrays the students and ecology movements as those forces which are best placed to oppose the new logics of our "programmed societies".[12] Melucci, working out of a paradigm similar to that of Touraine's, has argued that the new social movements, that is, "class organizational" and "class political" movements, challenge the basis of economic and political power in advanced industrial societies.[13]

With differing degrees of optimism, these interpretations regard the new social movements as necessarily progressive forces which challenge

oppressive relations and make possible a more egalitarian social order. Whereas Touraine and Melucci recognize the historicity and contingency of these forces, arguing that they are always susceptible to repression and displacement, Marcuse and Habermas are more confident of their permanence and success. All believe that these social movements are central to the transformation of capitalist societies.

Those who are antagonistic or sceptical about the new social movements are a strange amalgam of fundamentalist opinion ranging from the Right and Left of the political spectrum. Understandably neo-conservatives have been particularly antagonistic to these novel political forms, representing as they do the interests of marginal groupings such as ethnic minorities, homosexuals, peace campaigners, environmentalists and so forth.[14] Neo-conservatives have predicted a crisis of governability in society if these interests are conceded greater political representation, and much of their ideology has been directed against these forms of subjectivity.[15] On the other side of the spectrum, hard-line Marxists are sceptical about the capacity of these forces to transform capitalist relations of production which they argue are at the root of other forms of inequality and exclusion. Miliband, for example, has argued that the new social movements are secondary to the fundamental axis of political conflict in capitalist societies. For Marxist accounts it is the class struggle which constitutes the fundamental dynamic in society and all other forces have to be viewed against this backdrop.[16]

The third position, which I have called an agnostic perspective, embraces two groupings. On the one hand, there are those who deny the very idea that we can speak meaningfully about new social movements at all. Scott, for example, argues that the new social movements are not readily distinguishable from older forms of movement such as trade unions and other types of interest groups.[17] Another approach which takes an agnostic form, one which I have followed in this dissertation, argues that it is not possible to determine in an a priori fashion the political character and significance of new social movements. This perspective, and here I include writers such as Laclau, Mouffe and

Boggs, accepts that these forces are central components of contemporary advanced industrial societies, but rejects the argument that the political character of these forms can be ascertained in a general fashion.[18] Whether or not these movements are progressive or reactionary, ephemeral or permanent, secondary or principal agents of transformation, is dependent on the particular historical context in which they emerge and the type of political articulation which constitutes their identity. To argue otherwise would be to fall into an essentialist or structuralist trap in which it would be possible to "read-off" the characteristics of particular movements from an underlying social objectivity. Hence it would not be possible, nor desirable, to argue that these social movements are the new global agents of social change. In the first place, this would be a priori reasoning and, in the second place, it would assume that a global agent of transformation was possible and politically desirable.

Castells' empirical analyses and theoretical conclusions, especially those presented in The City and the Grassroots, cast light on these different interpretations. In the first place, Castells' arguments around urban social movements tend to confirm the idea that these new forces are not global but localised forms of political struggle concerned with specific issues pertaining to the community and a given territorial unit. A condition of their existence is that they are not articulated with a broader political project or agency. This does not mean that they do not produce effects, just that these effects are restricted to changes in urban meaning. Moreover, the logics which they challenge are representative of the dominant logics in contemporary societies.

In the second place, he also recognizes that these forms of struggle are not necessarily progressive forces, that is, "progressive" in terms of the values and interests he believes in, but can become reactionary and defensive movements depending on the types of political articulation through which they are constructed. In this sense again, his arguments tend to confirm the agnostic position outlined above. The third area of importance concerns urban social movements and the question of

transformation. At first reading, Castells' analyses dispute those interpretation which assert that the new social movements are the new global agents of change. Urban social movements do not have the capacity to transform society as a whole. Thus, though he contests the empirical conclusions of the first set of interpretations, he remains on their theoretical terrain in that he accepts the necessity and desirability of a global political agent. In this sense, he differs from the latter agnostic point of view, and it is here that I disagree with his account of urban social movements.

If we accept the parameters of the latter agnostic perspective, it means that there can be no, and in a normative sense, there should not be, a global subject of social change. Starting from the plurality and openness of the social, a thesis which I have assumed as a condition for my critical reading throughout the course of this dissertation, means that there is no essential political subjectivity which can transform and reorganise society in its own image. Doing away with a global agent of change, and accepting the contingency and openness of subjectivity, implies the possibility of a hegemonic overdetermination of different subjectivities and while retaining the relative autonomy of the constituent identities. This means that one is not faced with the antinomy of a purely localised identity or a purely global form of identity. In general terms this would mean that different social movements **could** be articulated together around particular political projects and in specific contexts. Their political orientation would be thoroughly contextual and political and could not, therefore, be explained prior to the investigation of these conditions.

Finally, how does our understanding of the city and, more specifically, Castells' theorization of the city, cast light on debates about modernity and post-modernity? The city has been at the leading edge in shaping many key historical transformations. Both Marx and Weber, perhaps the most prominent theorists of emerging capitalism in the West, stressed the importance of the city in the process of capitalist modernisation, and ultimately in the shaping of modernity itself.[19] Similarly, many writers have emphasised the role of the city

in the shift from modernity to post-modernity or, more specifically, the shift from modernism to post-modernism.[20] In many senses, the city is depicted as emblematic of post-modernity. Changing attitudes to architecture and urban planning, rapid transformations in lifestyle, the openness of identity construction in urban contexts, and so forth, have all made the city integral to the growing dispersion, fragmentation and plurality which has characterized the post-modern condition.[21]

But, and Castells' most recent analyses point in this direction, the "post-modern city" suggests a much more ambiguous constitution of urban spaces and meaning than might appear at a first reading. Processes of "de-industrialisation", "de-urbanisation" and "de-spatialisation" are characteristic of many contemporary advanced capitalist societies, and make the future character of cities much more undecided.[22] As Castells suggests in The City and the Grassroots and The Informational City, rapid technological innovations in the production of urban space has resulted in a proliferation of dislocatory effects on urban form and meaning. The rapid restructuring of urban space has resulted in a growing disintegration of urban life, which has constituted a major condition for the emergence of urban protests and movements attempting to construct alternative urban meanings. Castells' theorization of the city in advanced capitalist societies suggests that the industrial mode of development - we might say "Fordism" or "organised capitalism" - is giving way to a new informational mode of development, though he argues that the contradictions between this emergent mode and the previous one has resulted in numerous dislocations and political antagonisms. In general, Castells argues that the deployment of informational technology may lay the basis for the stabilization of capitalist reproduction. If this were the case, it would lead to the intensification of spatial dislocation both locally and globally. It would also be accompanied by an increasing authoritarianism. But the new technologies, he argues, could be used for different social and functional goals. Thus there is no intrinsic reason why it should be articulated by the new dominant logics. Whether this occurs or not, is dependent on whether new political subjectivities have the capacity to resist and possibly transform the present set of social relations.

Notes

Notes to Introduction

1. See Hall, P. (1988), Cities of Tomorrow, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 335-336; Gottdiener, M. (1988), "The Paradigm Shift in Urban Sociology", Urban Affairs Quarterly, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 170, 180-181; Lebas, E. (1977), "Regional Policy Research: Some Theoretical and Methodological Problems", in Harloe, M. Captive Cities, London: John Wiley and Sons, pp. 11-13.

2. Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 301.

3. See Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics, London: Verso, pp. 1-2, 7-8, 18-19; Smart, B. (1983), Foucault, Marxism and Critique, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 2, 5-10.

4. Anderson, P. (1976), Considerations on Western Marxism, London: New Left Books, pp. 114-116.

5. There has been a growing debate about the nature and implications of "post-Marxism". See Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 9-18; Geras, N. (1987), "Post-Marxism?", New Left Review, 163, pp. 40-91; Geras, N. (1988), "Ex-Marxism without substance: Being A Real Reply to Laclau and Mouffe", New Left Review, 165, pp. 34-61; Geras, N. (1989), Discourses of Extremity, London: Verso; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 1-5; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1987), "Post-Marxism without apologies", New Left Review, 166, pp. 79-106; Mouzelis, N. (1990), Essays on Post-Marxism, London: Macmillan; Wood, E. (1986), Retreat from Class: A New "True" Socialism, London: Verso.

6. The impact of Althusserian Marxist theory on the Anglo-American tradition has varied considerably. This is largely due to the differential reception of his work by this tradition. One strand of interpretation which emerged in the 1970s was extremely hostile to his work. Here I include the writings of Simon Clarke, Norman Geras and Edward Thompson. Others endeavoured to use the Althusserian theoretical framework in an uncritical fashion with a resultant series of "u-turns" and self-critiques. Here I am thinking of the writings of Paul Hirst and Barry Hindess. A more balanced set of readings and appropriations of Althusser's work emerged in the 1980s. Here I include the commentaries outlined by Perry Anderson, Ted Benton and, more recently, Gregory Elliot, and the more critical usage of his work outlined by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. I hope in the course of this dissertation to provide a more balanced appreciation of Althusserian theory in the context of my analysis of Castells' writings. See, respectively, Clarke, S. "Althusserian Marxism", in Clarke, S. (ed.), One Dimensional Marxism, London: Allison and Busby, pp. 7-102; Geras, N. (1977), "Althusser's

Marxism: An Assessment", in Western Marxism: A Critical Reader, London: Verso; Thompson, E. (1978), The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London: Merlin Press; Hindess, B. and Hirst, P. (1975), Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production, London: Macmillan; Hindess, B and Hirst, P. (1977), Mode of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-Critique of Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production, London: Macmillan; Anderson, P. (1980), Arguments within English Marxism, London: New Left Books; Benton, T. (1984), The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism: Althusser and His Influence, London: Macmillan; Elliot, G. (1987), Althusser: The Detour of Theory, London: Verso; Laclau, E. (1977), Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, London: New Left Books; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, London: Verso.

7. Regarding the "new social movements" see Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power, pp. 38-79; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 87, 159-171; Scott, A. (1990), Ideology and the New Social Movements, London: Unwin Hyman, pp. 13-35. The idea of "New Times" has been articulated by writers associated with the British journal Marxism Today. Though by no means a completely unified and coherent account of the social and political transformations which are taking place in contemporary advanced capitalist societies, the "New Times" debates embrace arguments pertaining to the shifts from "organised" to "disorganised" capitalism, "Fordism" to "post-Fordism" and "industrial" to "post-industrial" societies. See Bell, D. (1976), The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism, New York: Basic Books; Hall, S. and Jacques, M. "Introduction", to New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s, London: Lawrence and Wishart, pp. 11-20; Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1987), The End of Organised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity, pp. 1-21; Offe, C. (1985), Disorganised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 1-10; Touraine, A. (1974), The Post-Industrial Society, London: Wildwood House.

8. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 299-301, 308-309, 330. See also, Boggs, C. Social Movements and Political Power, pp. 1-79.

9. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold.

10. Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, London: Macmillan.

11. Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban-Regional Process, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

12. Laclau, E. (1990), New Reflections on the Revolution of our Time, London: Verso, p. 3. While not suggesting an exhaustive representation of intellectual developments in this regard, I refer, firstly, to Kuhn's and Feyerabend's critiques of empiricist philosophies of science, secondly, to certain trends in analytical philosophy, in particular those thinkers who have employed the writings of the "later Wittgenstein" such as Rorty and Winch, and, finally, to a number of attempts to weaken the rigid boundaries of Western metaphysics. With regard to the latter task, I focus on Heidegger's destruction of the Western tradition, Derrida's deconstructive readings of metaphysical texts and Vattimo's project to outline a a "weak ontology". This series

of investigative sites matches to some extent Bernstein's extremely suggestive survey of certain contemporary philosophical currents. Similarly, I agree with his thesis that there is a growing convergence around a philosophical standpoint which has attempted to go beyond "objectivism" and "relativism". The arguments in this dissertation will try and draw out some of the advantages of this attempt to weaken foundationalist accounts of social and political reality. See Bernstein, R. (1983), Beyond Objectivism and Relativism, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena, Evanston: Northwestern Press; Derrida, J. (1976), Of Grammatology, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins Press; Feyerabend, P. (1975), Against Method, London: New Left Books; Heidegger, M. (1962), Being and Time, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; Rorty, R. (1989), Contingency, Irony and Solidarity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Vattimo, G. (1988), The End of Modernity; Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-Modern Culture, Cambridge: Polity Press; Winch, P. (1958), The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

13. See, for example, Lyotard, J-F. (1984), The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. xxiii-xxv.

14. Blumenburg has written about the "reoccupation of positions in the modern age", in which "modern" breaks with the past are sometimes forced to operate within the parameters of that which it broke from. This analogy is useful in explaining the effect of the "residual traces" in Castells' later writings. See Blumenburg, H. (1983), The Legitimacy of the Modern Age, Cambridge: The MIT Press.

15. Bernstein, R. Beyond Objectivism and Relativism, pp. 109-115; Palmer, R. (1969), Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, pp. 13-45.

16. Dreyfus, H. and Rabinow, P. (1982), Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. xiii-xx.

17. See Foucault, M. (1970), The Order of Things, London: Tavistock Publications; Foucault, M. (1972), The Archaeology of Knowledge, London: Tavistock Publications; Foucault, M. (1973), The Birth of the Clinic, London: Tavistock.

18. Foucault, M. (1984), "Nietzsche, genealogy and history", in Rabinow, P. The Foucault Reader, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited, pp. 76-100.

19. Foucault, M. (1984), "Polemics, politics, and problemizations: an interview", in The Foucault Reader, pp. 388-390; Foucault, M. (1987), The Use of Pleasure, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited, pp. 3-13.

20. Foucault, M. The Archaeology of Knowledge, pp. 15-17, 31-35; 79-87.

21. Dreyfus, H and Rabinow, P. Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, pp. 44-52.

22. ibid., pp. 90-100.

23. ibid., pp. 82-84, 91-94.

24. ibid., p, vii.

25. Dreyfus, H. and Rabinow, P. Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, pp. 85-90.

26. Foucault, M. "Nietzsche, genealogy and history", in Rabinow, P. The Foucault Reader.

27. ibid., pp. 87-90.

28. ibid., pp. 94-96. See also Descombes, V. (1980), Modern French Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 115-117.

29. Foucault, M. (1984), "Truth and power", in Rabinow, P. The Foucault Reader, pp. 56-57.

30. Rajchman, J. (1985), Michel Foucault: The Freedom of Philosophy, New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 50-60.

31. Foucault, M. (1979), Discipline and Punish, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited, p. 31.

32. Foucault, M. (1984), "Polemics, politics, and problemizations: An Interview", in Rabinow, P. The Foucault Reader, pp. 386-388.

33. ibid., pp. 388-389.

34. ibid, 389.

35. ibid, pp. 388-390.

36. Foucault, M. The Use of Pleasure, pp. 8-13.

37. ibid., pp. 11-12.

38. Foucault, M. "Nietzsche, genealogy and history", pp. 83-85.

39. See, for example, Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena, Evanston: Northwestern University Press; Derrida, J. (1982), Margins of Philosophy, Brighton: The Harvester Press.

40. Staten, H. (1985), Wittgenstein and Derrida, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 31.

41. Descombes, V. Modern French Philosophy, pp. 140.

42. ibid., pp. 138-141.

43. Gasche, R (1986), The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 121-142.

44. Derrida, J. (1988), "Letter to a Japanese friend", in Wood, D. and Bernasconi, R. (eds.), Derrida and Differance, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, pp. 1-5.

45. See Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 50-56.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. See Harloe, M. (1975), "Introduction", to Harloe, M. (ed.), Captive Cities, London: John Wiley, pp. 2-3; Pickvance, C. (1976), "Historical materialist approaches to urban sociology", in Pickvance, C. Urban Sociology, London: Methuen, pp. 1-3; Rex, J. (1978), "The city, Castells, and Althusser", International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol. 2, No. 3, p. 566-569; Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, London: Unwin Hyman, p. 9.

2. Here I refer to the growing fiscal and legitimation crises experienced by welfare states particularly during the 1970s. There have been numerous accounts concerning the causes and consequences of this breakdown. See Castells, M. (1975), "Collective consumption and urban contradictions in advanced capitalism", in Lindberg, L. et al Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism, Lexington: D. C. Heath; Gough, I. (1979), The Political Economy of the Welfare State, London: Macmillan; O'Connor, J. (1973), Fiscal Crisis of the State, New York: St. Martins Press.

3. See Plotke, D. (1990), "What's so new about new social movements", Socialist Review, Vol 20, No. 1, pp. 81-87.

4. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, p. 4.

5. ibid., pp. 7-63.

6. ibid., pp. 64-112.

7. Althusser, L. (1969), For Marx, London: New Left Books, pp. 183-191.

8. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 115-242.

9. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 183-191.

10. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 3.

11. ibid., pp. 75-76. See also Bell, C. and Newby, H. (1971), Community Studies, London: Allen and Unwin, p. 91; Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 97-99.

12. A classic representative of this "nostalgia/authenticity" dialectic is the early philosophy of Martin Heidegger. See, for example, Heidegger, M. (1962), Being and Time, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

13. Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 86-88, 94-96.

14. See Bell, C and Newby, H. Community Studies, pp. 32-35.

15. Wirth, L. (1938), "Urbanism as a way of life", American Journal of Sociology, 44, pp. 1-24.

16. ibid., pp. 12-14.

17. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 78.

18. ibid., p. 83.

19. ibid.

20. ibid., pp. 82-85.

21. ibid., 81-82.

22. ibid., p. 83.

23. ibid.

24. ibid., p. 84.

25. ibid., p. 85.

26. ibid., pp. 86-87.

27. ibid., p. 94.

28. See Gottdiener, M. (1985), The Social Production of Space, Austin: Texas, p. 150.

29. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 87.

30. ibid., pp. 88-91.

31. ibid., pp. 92-93.

32. ibid.

33. ibid., p. 6.

34. ibid., pp. 1-6.

35. This methodological device is drawn from Marx's remarks about the scientific approach to the study of political economy. See Marx, K. (1977), "Grundrisse", in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 389.

36. See Althusser, L. For Marx; Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital; Poulantzas, N. (1973), Political Power and Social Classes, London: New Left Books.

37. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 116-120.

38. ibid., pp. 120-122.

39. ibid., p. 122.

40. ibid.

41. ibid., pp. 125-128.

42. ibid., p. 124.

43. Castells, M. (1976), "Theory and ideology in urban research", in Pickvance, C. Urban Sociology, p. 74; Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 94, 124.

44. Castells, M. "Theory and ideology in urban sociology", pp. 75-83; Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 125-128.

45. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 126.

46. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 117-118, 121-123, 200-205.

47. Castells, M. (1976), "Theoretical propositions for an experimental study of urban social movements", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology, pp. 149-150.

48. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 129-130.

49. Castells, M. "An experimental study of urban social movements", p. 150. See also Balibar, E. "On the basic concepts of historical materialism", in Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 229-233.

50. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 130.

51. ibid., p. 207.

52. ibid., p. 209.

53. See Poulantzas, N. Political Power and Social Classes, pp. 187-245.

54. ibid., pp. 212-218, 275-307.

55. ibid., pp. 210-220, 225-229.

56. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 215-221.

57. ibid., 216-219.

58. ibid., 129-233.

59. ibid., p. 128.

60. See Descombes, V. (1980), Modern French Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 82; Dreyfus, H. and Rabinow, P. (1982),

Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. xv-xvi; Levi-Strauss, C. (1963), Totemism, Boston: Beacon Press, p. 16.

61. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 129-207.

62. ibid., p. 130.

63. ibid.

64. ibid., pp. 131-145.

65. ibid., p. 131.

66. ibid.

67. ibid., 136-137.

68. ibid., p. 137.

69. ibid., p. 145.

70. Castells, M. "An experimental study of urban social movements", pp. 157-158.

71. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 238-239.

72. ibid., pp. 145-169.

73. ibid., pp. 146-149, 156-158.

74. ibid., p. 153.

75. ibid., p. 153-155.

76. ibid., pp. 156-157.

77. ibid., pp. 158-159.

78. ibid., pp. 234-242.

79. Castells, M. (1977), "Towards a political urban sociology", in Harloe, M. Captive Cities, p. 61.

80. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 234-235.

81. Weber, M. (1958), The City, Chicago: The Free Press.

82. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 235.

83. ibid., pp. 131-137.

84. ibid. p. 236.

85. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 236.

86. ibid., pp. 237-242.

87. ibid., p. 240.

88. Castells, M. Castells, M. "An experimental study of urban social movements", p. 159.

89. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 240. Here Castells draws on Althusser's theory of ideology. See, for example, Althusser, L. (1971), Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, London: New Left Books, pp. 162-170.

90. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 238-239.

91. ibid.

92. ibid., pp. 240-241.

93. See Harloe, M. "Introduction", pp. 19.

94. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 241-242.

95. Castells, M. "An experimental study of urban social movements", pp. 151-153, 160-161.

96. ibid., pp. 161-162.

97. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 241-242.

98. ibid., p. 241.

99. ibid.

100. ibid., pp. 241-242.

101. ibid., p. 237.

102. Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, p. 189; Pickvance, C, "Introduction: historical materialist approaches to urban sociology", p. 22.

103. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 241-242.

104. ibid., pp. 243-245.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. Poulantzas, N. (1973), Political Power and Social Classes, London: New Left Books, pp. 99-103.

2. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, pp. 243-275.

3. ibid., pp. 243-245.

4. ibid., pp. 246-248.

5. ibid., pp. 260-275.

6. ibid., pp. 276-378.

7. ibid., 244.

8. ibid., p. 243. See also Poulantzas, N. Political Power and Social Classes, pp. 97-98.

9. Poulantzas, N. Political Power and Social Classes, p. 99.

10. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 243-245.

11. ibid., p. 243.

12. ibid., p. 244.

13. ibid., pp. 244-245.

14. ibid.

15. ibid., pp. 246-259.

16. The main contours of the debate, along with a pathbreaking analysis of the issues, is presented in Lukes, S. (1974), Power: A Radical View, London: Macmillan, pp. 9-25.

17. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 248-249.

18. Wood, R. (1963), "The contributions of political science to urban form", in Hirsch, W. (ed.), Urban Life and Form, New York: Rinehart and Winston.

19. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 249.

20. ibid.

21. ibid.

22. ibid., pp. 250, 251.

23. ibid., p. 260.

24. ibid.

25. Poulantzas, N. Political Power and Social Classes, p. 37.

26. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 260.

27. ibid., pp. 261-262.

28. ibid., p. 262.

29. ibid., p. 268.

30. ibid., p. 266-268.

31. ibid., pp. 262-263.

32. ibid., pp. 263-265.

33. ibid., p. 265.

34. ibid., p. 262.

35. ibid.

36. ibid.

37. Castells, M. (1976), "Theoretical propositions for an experimental study of urban social movements", in Pickvance, C. Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, London: Methuen, p. 162.

38. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 434, 435.

39. Castells, M. "Theoretical propositions for an experimental study of urban social movements", pp. 157-160.

40. ibid., pp. 151-153.

41. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 268.

42. ibid., pp. 270-273.

43. Castells, M. "Theoretical propositions for an experimental study of urban social movements", pp. 168-171.

44. Pickvance, C. (1976), "Introduction: historical materialist approaches to urban sociology", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, p. 27.

45. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 377.

46. ibid., See also Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, London: Unwin Hyman, p. 202.

47. ibid., pp. 271-272.

48. ibid., p. 272.

49. ibid.

50. ibid., p. 273.

51. Castells, M. "Theoretical Propositions for an experimental study of urban social movements", p. 171.

52. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 269.

53. ibid., p. 273.

54. ibid.

55. ibid.

56. ibid.

57. ibid., p. 326.

58. ibid.

59. ibid., p. 327.

60. ibid., pp. 328-329.

61. ibid, p. 330.

62. ibid., pp. 334-343.

63. ibid., p. 334.

64. ibid.

65. ibid. p. 335.

66. ibid.

67. ibid., pp. 336-337.

68. ibid., pp. 337-338.

69. ibid., pp. 338-339.

70. ibid., pp. 340-341.

71. ibid., pp. 341-343.

72. ibid., pp. 342 -343.

73. ibid., p. 346.

74. ibid.

75. ibid., p. 347.

76. ibid., pp. 344-345, 347.

77. ibid., 377.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, p. 437.

2.See Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, p. 7.

3. Elliot, G. (1987), Althusser: The Detour of Theory, London: Verso, pp. 243-244.

4. Descombes, V. (1980), Modern French Philosophy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 134-135.

5. See Bogue, R. (1989), Deleuze and Guattari, London: Routledge. pp. 1-6; Touraine, A. (1971), The May Movement: Reform and Protest, New York: Random House, pp. 22-30.

6. Hall, S. and Jacques, M. (1988), "1968", Marxism Today, May, pp. 24-27; Laclau. E. and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, London: Verso, pp. 165-171.

7. See Benton, T. (1984), The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism, London: Macmillan, pp. 83, 96-97.

8. See Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 47; Epstein, B. (1990), "Rethinking social movement theory", Socialist Review, Vol. 20, No. 1, p. 35; Smart, B. (1983), Foucault, Marxism and Critique, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 7-8.

9. Gamble, A. (1988), The Free Market and Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism, London: Macmillan, pp. 1-13.

10. Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 74-75, 169-170.

11. Castells, M. (1977), "Afterword", in Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 437-471; Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, London: Macmillan.

12. Castells, M. and Ipola, E. (1976), "Epistemological practice and social science", in Economy and Society, 5, pp. 111-144.

13. ibid., p. 139.

14. Castells, M. "Afterword", to The Urban Question, p.438.

15. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, pp. 179-180.

16. ibid., pp. 11-12.

17. Castells, M. "Afterword", to The Urban Question, pp. 459-462. For the connection with Marx's method, see Sayer, D. (1979), Marx's Method, Brighton: Harvester Press, p. 102.

18. ibid., p. 451; Castells, M. City, Class and Power, p. 175.

19. See Bhaskar, R. (1978), A Realist Philosophy of Science, Brighton: Harvester Press; Jessop, B. (1982), The Capitalist State, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 213-220; Sayer, A. (1984), Method in Social Science, London: Hutchinson; Sayer, D. (1979), Marx's Method, Brighton: Harvester Press.

20. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, p. 12.

21. ibid.

22. ibid., pp. 15-37.

23. ibid., p. 180.

24. ibid.

25. See Castells, M. City, Class and Power, pp. 132-146.

26. ibid., pp. 180-181.

27. ibid., p. 180.

28. ibid., pp. 180-181. In this regard, Castells' changing theoretical position reflects the transformation of other Althusserian Marxists, most notably Nicos Poulantzas, whose theory of the capitalist state was essential to Castells' approach to urban politics. For Poulantzas' changing perspectives, see Poulantzas, N. (1975) Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, London: New Left Books; and, especially, Poulantzas, N. (1978) State, Power, Socialism, London: Verso.

29. ibid., p. 150.

30. ibid., p. 171.

31. Castells, M. (1981), "Local government, urban crises and political change", in Zeitlen, M. (ed.), Political Power and Social Classes, Greenwich: JAI Press, pp. 16-17.

32. See Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, London: Hutchinson, pp. 202-203; Boggs, C. (1982), The Impasse of European Communism, Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 84-92.

33. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, pp. 37-38, 171-172.

34. ibid., pp. 34-36.

35. Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements, London: Edward Arnold; Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban Regional-Process, London: Edward Arnold.

36. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. xvi-xvii.

37. ibid., p. xvii.

38. ibid., p. 215.

39. ibid., p. 322.

40. ibid., p. xv.

41. ibid., p. xvi.

42. ibid.

43. ibid., p. 339.

44. ibid., pp. xx, 297, 339.

45. ibid., p. xx.

46. ibid., p. 339. Although it might be observed that strictly speaking the Althusserian model of knowledge production does not even have room for "observed experience" as this would constitute a relapse into an empiricist mode. See Althusser, L. (1970), Reading Capital, London: New Left Books, pp. 34-40.

47. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 340.

48. ibid., pp. xvi-xviii, xx, 339-340.

49. ibid., p. 339.

50. ibid.

51. Sayer, D. Marx's Method, p. 102

52. ibid., p. 114.

53. ibid., p. 102. See also Edward Thompson's vehement defense of "historical logic" against formal theoreticism. Thompson, E. (1978), The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London: Merlin Press.

54. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 298-299.

55. ibid., p. 276.

56. Lowe, S. (1986), <u>Urban Social Movements: The City after Castells</u>, London: Macmillan, pp. 42-44.

57. Castells, M. <u>The City and the Grassroots</u>, p. 217.

58. ibid., pp. 218-220.

59. ibid., p. 220.

60. ibid.

61. ibid., pp. 223-224.

62. ibid., pp. 224-225.

63. ibid., p. 278.

64. ibid., p. 226.

65. ibid., p. 256.

66. ibid., pp. 256-257.

67. ibid.

68. ibid., p. 258.

69. ibid., p. 260.

70. ibid.

71. ibid., p. 262.

72. ibid., p. 268.

73. ibid., p. 269.

74. ibid., pp. 269-272.

75. ibid., pp. 272-275.

76. ibid., pp. 276-277.

77. ibid., p. 277.

78. ibid., p. 278.

79. ibid., p. 284.

80. ibid., pp. 299-300.

81. ibid., p. 302.

82. ibid.

83. ibid., pp. 302-303.

84. ibid., p. 305.

85. ibid.

86. ibid., p. 306.

87. ibid.

88. Castells, M. The Informational City, pp. 17-19. Castells' notion of a mode of information shares a close resemblance with Mark Poster's usage of the category. See, for example, Poster, M. (1984), Foucault, Marxism and History: Mode of Porduction Versus Mode of Information, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 52-54; Poster, M. (1990), The Mode of Information: Post-Structuralism and Social Context, Cambridge: Polity Press.

89. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 308-309.

90. ibid., pp. 309-310.

91. ibid., p. 312. See also Castells, M. (1984), "Space and society: managing the new historical relationships", in Smith, P. (ed.), Cities in Transformation: Capital, Class and the State, Beverly Hills: Sage. pp. 253-260.

92. Castells, M. The Informational City, pp. 19-32.

93. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 312-314; Castells, M. and Henderson, J. (1987), "Techno-economic restructuring, socio-political processes and spatial transformation: a global perspective", in Henderson, J. and Castells, M. (eds.), Global Restructuring and Territorial Development, London: Sage, pp. 2-5, 7-17.

94. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 314. See also Castells, M. The Informational City, pp. 349-354.

95. ibid., pp. 314-317.

96. ibid., pp. 316-318.

97. ibid., 303-305.

98. ibid., 318-323.

99. ibid., pp. 327-331.

100. ibid., pp. 329-331,

101. ibid., p. 330.

102. See Miliband, R. (1983), Class Power and State Power, London: Verso, p. 52.

103. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 298.

104. ibid., 298-301, 335-336.

105. ibid., p. 307.

106. ibid., p. 320.

107. Marx, K. (1977), XI Theses on Feuerbach, in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 158; Marx, K. (1977), Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, p. 300. For a discussion of Castells as a theorist of "urban praxis", see Smith, M. and Tadanico, R. "Urban theory reconsidered: production, reproduction and collective action", in Smith, M. and Feagin, J. The Capitalist City: Global Restructuring and Community Politics, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 89-90.

108. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 331-332.

109. ibid., p. 302.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. See Althusser, L. (1969), For Marx, London: New Left Books, pp. 55-71; Althusser, L and Balibar, E. (1970), Reading Capital, London: New Left Books, pp. 44-45.

2. Althusser, L For Marx, pp. 21, 26; Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, London: New Left Books, pp. 13-15.

3. Althusser, L. (1990), "Theory, theoretical practice and theoretical formation: ideology and ideological struggle", in Althusser, L. Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists and Other Essays, pp. 3-15.

4. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 37.

5. ibid., pp. 40-43.

6. See, for example, Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 32.

7. See, for example, "Feuerbach's 'Philosophical Manifesto's'", "On the Young Marx", in Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 43-86.

8. ibid., pp. 35-38; 45-48.

9. See Hegel, G. (1977), Phenomenology of Spirit, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

10. Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 17.

11. Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 69.

12. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 17.

13. See, for example, Marx, K. (1977), Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 87-96.

14. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 28, 32-33.

15. It is named a reading of vision because it concentrates on the sightings, moments of insight which Marx finds useful, and oversights when Marx isolates what he sees as mistakes or logical contradictions within the argumentation of those he reads. What defines this mode of reading is the recognition that the object under investigation is a given. In other words, it is assumed as immediately present - available for observation - to both sets of investigations (Marx and those whom he criticises). In this sense, Marx's achievement would be restricted to having better vision of a pre-ordained field of investigation. See Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 19.

16. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 19-20.

17. ibid., pp. 24-28; See also Foucault, M. (1967), Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason, pp. 11-14.

18. Althusser summarises this idea of a symptomatic reading in the following fashion:

> Such is Marx's second reading: a reading which might well be called "symptomatic" (symptomale), insofar as it divulges the undivulged event in the text it reads, and in the same movement relates it to a different text, present as a necessary absence in the first. Like his first reading, Marx's second reading presupposes the existence of two texts, and the measurement of the first against the second. But what distinguishes this new reading from the old one is the fact that in the new one the second text is articulated with the lapses in the first text. Here again, at least in the way peculiar to theoretical texts (the only ones whose analysis is at stake here), we find the necessity and possibility of one reading on two bearings simultaneously.

See Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 28.

19. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 41-42.

20. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 45-47.

21. As Althusser puts it in For Marx:

> (T)o think the unity of a determinate ideological unity (which presents itself explicitly as a whole, and which is explicitly or implicitly "lived" as a whole or as an intention of "totalization") by means of the concept of **problematic** is to allow the typical systematic structure unifying all the elements of the thought to be brought to light, and therefore to discover in this unity a

determinate content which makes it possible both to conceive the
meaning of the elements of the ideology concerned - and to relate
this ideology to the problems left or posed to every thinker by the
historical period in which he lives.

See Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 67.

22. As Althusser argues in Reading Capital:

This [the category of problematic D.H.] opens the way to the
understanding of the determination of the **visible** as visible, and
conjointly, of the invisible as invisible, Any object or problem
situated on the terrain and within the horizon, ie., in the definite
structured field of the theoretical problematic of a given
theoretical discipline, is visible. We must take these words
literally. The sighting is thus no longer the act of an individual
subject, endowed with the faculty of vision which he exercises
either attentively or distractedly; the sighting is the act of its
structural conditions, it is the relation of immanent reflection
between the field of the problematic and **its** objects and **its**
problems. Vision then loses the religious privileges of divine
reading: it is no more than a reflection of the immanent necessity
that ties an object or problem to its conditions of existence, which
lie in the conditions of its production. It is literally no longer
the eye (the minds eye) of a subject which which **sees** what exists in
the field defined by a theoretical problematic: it is this field
itself which **sees itself** in the objects or problems it defines -
sighting being merely the necessary of the field on its objects.

See Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 25.

23. Althusser, L. (1972), Politics and History: Montesquieu, Rousseau,
Hegel and Marx, pp. 164-168.

24. Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 78.

25. Althusser presents us with a number of different and, at times,
contradictory theorizations of ideology depending on whether or not he
attempts to distinguish ideology from knowledge or science, or whether
he tries to account for the function of ideology in the production and
reproduction of social formations. At this point I am concerned
primarily with the former conceptualization. Throughout his analysis,
Althusser resists the urge to reduce ideological practices, as he calls
them, to other spheres or instances of the social by portraying them as
epiphenomena or as symptomatic of **false consciousness.** According to
Althusser, ideologies are integral to the constitution and reproduction
of the social. Ideological practice is not therefore an **external**
imposition of incoherent or illogical ideas designed to deceive people
in a purely instrumental fashion, as one might portray propoganda for
instance, but, rather, a set images, myths, ideas, concepts and rituals
embodied in institutions and practices which allow subjects to "make
sense" or to "live out" their social relations. Rather than being
confined to an external sphere of the social - a separate realm in which
subjects become conscious or deluded about a preconstituted reality -

ideological practices and structures actively construct or interpellate subjectivity allowing people to become conscious and to act in the world and in history.

26. As he puts it:

> An ideology (in the strict Marxist sense of the term) - the sense in which Marxism is not itself an ideology) can be regarded as characterised in this particular respect by the fact that **its own problematic is not conscious of itself.** When Marx tells us (and he continually repeats it) not to take an ideology's consciousness of itself for its essence, he also means that before it is unconscious of the real problems it is a response (or non-response) to, an ideology is already unconscious of its "theoretical presuppositions", that is, the active but unavowed problematic which fixes for it the meaning and meaning of **its problems** and thereby of their solutions.

See Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 69.

27. ibid., p. 231.

28. ibid., p. 74.

29. Althusser's notion of practice is generalised from the Marxist category of economic production. Thus any particular practice - and Althusser specifies four major forms: economic, political, ideological and scientific - involves the transformation of a given product into something qualitatively new. Theoretical practice, for example, involves the transformation of of ideology into knowledge through the intervention of Theory. See Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 185-187.

30. The distinction stretching back at least to Hegel is central to Marx's method of political economy. For example, in the "Introduction to the Grundrisse" he asserts the following:

> It would appear to be correct to start with the real and concrete... However, a closer look reveals that this is false... The latter (the method of those economic systems which move from general notions to concrete ones) is decidedly the correct scientific method. The concrete is concrete because it is the synthesis of many determinations, and therefore a unity of diversity. That is why it appears in thought as a process of synthesis, as a result, not as a point of departure...(in scientific method) abstract determinations lead to the reproduction of the concrete via the path of thought... The method which consists of rising from the abstract to the concrete is merely a way thought appropriates the concrete and reproduces it as a concrete in thought.").

Marx cited in Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 186.

31. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 184-185.

32. Laclau, E. (1977), <u>Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory</u>, London: New Left Books, pp. 59-62.

33. Althusser, L. <u>For Marx</u>, p. 188.

34. ibid., pp. 187-190.

35. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. <u>Reading Capital</u>, pp. 35-37.

36. ibid., p. 37.

37. ibid., pp. 38-40.

38. ibid., pp. 39-40.

39. ibid.

40. ibid., p. 41.

41. ibid., pp. 42-43.

42. ibid., pp. 48-51.

43. ibid., pp. 44-46.

44. Althusser, L. <u>For Marx</u>, pp. 187-193.

45. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. <u>Reading Capital</u>, pp. 54-55.

46. ibid., p. 41.

47. ibid.

48. See, for example, Heidegger, M. (1962), <u>Being and Time</u>, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 174-175.

49. Althusser argues that Marxist philosophy - dialectical materialism - is the Theory of theoretical practice, that is, it occupies a legal a priority in relation to other theoretical systems, but he does not specify why this should be the case and it remains an unthought condition of possibility for his philosophical discourse. In other texts, for example, his essay on "Freud and Lacan", Althusser does specify certain conditions making possible a scientific discourse and he includes the presence of theory in the strong sense, and most importantly the existence of an authentic theoretical object not reducible to other theoretical ensembles an eclectic mish-mash or "borrowings" from other investigative systems through which a scientific domain is founded, the existence of a methodology appropriate to this system of discourse and a practice corresponding to this theoretical system. In what might be termed Althusser's later writings there is a notable shift on the question of scientificity especially with regard to the status of Marxist theory. In these late writings, and in particular in his essay entitled "Lenin and Philosophy" and <u>Essays in Self-Criticism</u>, Marxist theory is depicted as including historical

materialism (science in the strict sense) and dialectical materialism (philosophy). In this formulation, Marxist philosophy "represents" the class struggle in the realm of **theory** and hence philosophy is neither pure science or pure theory (that is, in the sense of the Theory of theoretical production), but **political practice** in the realm of theory itself. See Althusser, L. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, pp. 64-68; 198-204; Althusser, L. (1976), Essays in Self-Criticism, London: Verso, pp. 46-51.

50. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 53.

51. For a fuller elaboration of this notion of a materialist ontology see Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1987), "Post-Marxism without apologies", New Left Review, 166, pp. 86-87.

52. This tension in Althusser's texts is manifest in a number of instances. For example, while the overall thrust of his argument in the essays presented in For Marx point to a separation between reality and theoretical discourse, he still retains a commitment to some form of correspondence between the two levels. In his critique of German idealism he writes the following for example: "But what is infinitely more revealing, and of the problematic itself, is to discover by comparing it to the problems raised for the neo-Hegelians by real History that although this problematic does provide solutions to real problems, it does not correspond to any of these real problems." He continues to suggest "the ideological deformation ... and mystification of problems and objects". See Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 80, 82-83.

53. Castells, M. (1977), "Towards a political urban sociology", in Harloe, M. (ed.), Captive Cities, London: John Wiley.

54. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, p. 234. See also Castells, M. (1976), "Theory and ideology in urban sociology", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology, London: Tavistock Publications, p. 83; Castells, M. and Ipola, E. (1976), "Epistemological practice and the social sciences", Economy and Society, 5, pp. 111-144

55. See Harloe, M. (1979), "Marxism, the state and the urban question: critical notes on two recent French theories", in Crouch, C. (ed.), State and Economy in Contemporary Capitalism, London: Croom Helm, p. 128; Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, London: Unwin Hyman, pp. 174-177.

56. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 5.

57. Hindess, B. (1977), Philosophy and Methodology in the Social Sciences, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. 38-48; Hirst, P. (1979), On Law and Ideology, London: Macmillan, pp. 20-21.

58. This epistemological and methodological commitment is implicit in much of Castells' earlier writings. The whole structuralist enterprise which underpins his construction of the field of urban political analysis assumes the existence of a structured reality - particular modes of production, antagonistically structured class relations,

particular state institutions and so forth - all of which make possible the investigation of urban political practices. See Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 243-245.

59. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 115-128; 234-235.

60. Holton, R. (1986), Cities, Capitalism and Civilization, London: Allen and Unwin, p. 14.

61. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 444-446.

62. ibid., p. 463.

63. ibid., p. 448.

64. ibid., p. 449.

65. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 108-109, 117-128.

66. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 112-113, 165-166.

67. This position had been advanced in certain existentialist and/or humanist/ethical interpretations of Marxism. See the writings of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, for example.

68. Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 166-167.

69. ibid., 200-209; Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 98-100, 104-105.

70. Marx, K. (1977), "Grundrisse", in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 352.

71. As Althusser puts it:

> As an example, take the complex structured whole that is society. In it, the "relations of production" are not the pure phenomena of the forces of production; they are also their conditions of existence. The superstructure is not the pure phenomena of the structure, it is also its condition of its existence. This follows from Marx's principle, referred to above, that production without society, that is, without social relations, exists nowhere; that we can go no deeper than the unity that is the unity of the whole in which, if the relations of production do have production itself as their condition of existence, production has as its condition of existence its form: the relations of production.

See Althusser, L For Marx, p. 204.

72. ibid., p. 202.

73. ibid., pp. 117-128; See also Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, pp. 97, 99.

74. Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 113.

75. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 319.

76. Therefore, we have the argument that in the capitalist mode of production the economic instance is from the outset both determinant and dominant whereas in the feudal mode of production the economic is, by definition, determinant although the political element or level is dominant. See Balibar, E. "On the Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism", in Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 224.

77. Althusser, L. For Marx, p.106.

78. See Freud, S. (1976), The Interpretation of Dreams, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, pp. 383-414, 417-418.

79. Althusser, L. For Marx, p.106.

80. See Lowy, M. (1981), The Politics of Combined and Uneven Development: The Theory of Permanent Revolution, London: New Left Books, pp. 30-69.

81. See, for example, Althusser, L. For Marx, pp. 95-102.

82. ibid., p. 98.

83. Althusser, L. For Marx, p.210.

84. Althusser, L and Balibar, E. Reading Capital, p. 112.

85. ibid.

86. Althusser, L. (1971), Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, London: New Left Books, pp. 173-183.

87. Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 233.

88. Althusser, L. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, pp. 166-170.

89. Althusser, L. For Marx, p. 233; Althusser, L. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, pp. 162-170.

90. For a decisive critique of the Althusserian a priori separation of the "Holy Trinity" of levels in a social formation, see Laclau, E. Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, pp. 72-77.

91. See Cutler, A., Hindess, B., Hirst, P. and Hussein, A. (1977), Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today, Vol 1, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 222. See also Hindess and Hirst's critique of "determination in the last instance" and relative autonomy" in Hindess, B. and Hirst, P. (1977), Modes of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-Critique of Pre-Capitalist Formations, London: Macmillan.

92. For a brilliant expose of these incompatabilites, see Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 100-105.

93. Wittgenstein, L. (1953), Philosophical Investigations, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 44.

Notes to Chapter 5

Jessop, B. (1990), State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in its Place, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 10-13; Poulantzas, N. (1973), Political Power and Social Classes, London: New Left Books, pp. 11-23.

2. Scott, A. (1990), Ideology and the New Social Movements, London: Unwin and Hyman, pp. 52-53.

3. In this regard, I use Bernstein's idea of the "mainstream American sociological tradition". He refers to sociologists such as Merton, Parsons, Smelser, and so forth. See Bernstein, R. (1976), The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 7-21.

4. The structural functionalist accounts of social action and collective behaviour have their roots in the writings of American sociologists such as Talcott Parsons and Neil Smelser. See Parsons, T. (1949), The Structure of Social Action, London: Allen and Unwin; Smelser, N. (1963), Theory of Collective Behaviour, New York: Free Press of Glencoe. For critical accounts of these theories, see Melucci, A. (1980), "The new social movements: a theoretical approach", Social Science Information, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 201-202; Scott, A. Ideology and the New Social Movements, pp. 42-45. There are numerous critiques of the Marxist tradition's failure to theorize the problem of social action and agency, not least those presented in Castells' later writings. See Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots, London: Edward Arnold, pp. 298-299.

5. See Melucci, A. "The new social movements: a theoretical approach", pp. 199-201; Scott, A. Ideology and the New Social Movements, pp. 1-5; Touraine, A. (1981), The Voice and the Eye, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 40-55.

6. Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, p. 263.

7. ibid., p. 266.

8. ibid., pp. 261-263.

9. ibid., pp. 260-275.

10. ibid., p. 270.

11. Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, London: Macmillan, pp. 32-33.

12. ibid., pp. 38-43.

13. ibid., pp. 2-3, 6-19, 8-43, 73-177.

14. ibid., p. 39.

15. ibid., pp. 39-40.

16. ibid., pp. 42-43.

17. ibid., p. 19.

18. ibid., pp. 21-33, 37-61.

19. ibid., pp. 34.

20. ibid., pp. 35-36.

21. ibid., p. 34.

22. ibid., pp. 35-36.

23. See Dunleavy, P. (1980), Urban Political Analysis, London: Macmillan, pp. 2-3; Pickvance, C. (1976), "Historical materialist approaches to urban sociology", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, pp, 7-10; Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, pp. 172-174.

24. See, for example, Lojkine, J. (1976), "Contribution to a Marxist theory of capitalist urbanization", in Pickvance, C. ed.), Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, London: Tavistock, pp. 123-124; Lojkine, J. (1977), " 'Big Firms' strategies, urban policy and urban social movements", in Harloe, M. (ed.), Captive Cities, London: John Wiley, p. 142; Mingione, E. (1981), Social Conflict and the City, New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 66.

25. Dunleavy, P. (1979), "Rehabilitating collective consumption", Unpublished Paper, Department of Politics, University of London, pp. 21-22; Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 289-311.

26. Peter Saunders has attempted, quite convincingly, to uncouple the spatial and the social dimensions of Castells' early theoretical writings. See Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, Chapter 8.

27. See, for example, Lowe, S. (1986), Urban Social Movements: The City after Castells, pp. 11-12; Harloe, M. (1977), "Introduction" to Harloe, M. (ed.), Captive Cities, pp. 21-22; Mingione, E. Social Conflict and the City, pp. 66-67; Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 224-232.

28. Mingione, E. Social Conflict and the City, p. 66.

29. Harloe, M. (1979), "Marxism, the state and the urban question: critical notes on two recent state theories", in Crouch, C. (ed.), State and Economy in Contemporary Capitalism, London: Croom Helm, p. 136; Harvey, D. (1978), "Labour, capital and class struggle around the built environment in Advanced Capitalist Societies", in Cox, K. (ed.), Urbanization and Conflict in Market Societies, London: Methuen, p. 35.

30. Dunleavy, P. Urban Political Analysis, p. 47; Saunders, P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 225-226.

31. Castells, M. (1980), The Economic Crisis and American Society, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 41-47.

32. Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, pp. 38-42, 168-170.

33. See Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. (1970), Reading Capital, pp. 258-259; Cohen, G. (1986), "Forces and relations of production", in Roemer, J. (ed.), Analytical Marxism, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 11-19; Marx, K. (1857), McLellan, D. pp. 517-518;

34. Derrida has written extensively on the logic of the supplement, that is, logics which are both merely supplementary to a full essence yet absolutely necessary for that essence to constitute itself. See Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, pp. 88-89; Derrida, J. (1976), Of Grammatology, London: The John Hopkins Press, pp. 141-144.

35. Foucault, M. (1976), Discipline and Punish, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Limited, pp. 135-228; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 79-80.

36. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, pp. 18-21.

37. See Poulantzas, N. (1973), Political Power and Social Classes, London: New Left Books, pp. 210-221. See also Clarke, S. (1977), "Marxism, sociology and Poulantzas' theory of the state", Capital and Class, 2, p. 11.

38. Jessop, B. (1985), Nicos Poulantzas: Marxist theory and political strategy, London: Macmillan, pp. 53-81; Poulantzas, N. Political Power and Social Classes, pp. 187-225.

39. The capitalist state achieves this by offsetting the structural crises of profitability surrounding the provision of the collective means of consumption and disarticulating potential antagonisms that might arise out of such contradictions.

40. Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 214-219.

41. With particular reference to the British case, see Gamble, A. (1985), Britain in Decline, London: Macmillan, pp. 100-103; Gamble, A. (1988), The Free Market and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism, London: Macmillan, pp. 61-73; King, D. (1987), The New Right, London: Macmillan, pp. 49-69.

42. Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 219-225.

43. Mingione, E. Social Conflict and the City, pp. 66-67.

44. Castells, M. (1976), "Theory and ideology in urban sociology", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology, London: Tavistock Publishers, p. 75.

45. See Castells, M. (1975), "Collective consumption and urban contradictions in advanced capitalism", in Lindberg, L. et al Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism, Lexington: D.C. Heath, pp. 16-17.

46. Dunleavy, P. (1979), "The urban bases of political alignment", British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 9, pp. 417-419; Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 235-238.

47. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, pp. 171-172.

48. In City, Class and Power, Castells repeats these classic gestures. See Castells, M. City. Class and Power, pp. 38-43.

49. There are numerous "neo-liberal" critiques of the Keynesian welfare state and all the assumptions underpinning the post-war social democratic consensus. On a theoretical level, there has been a widespread deployment of liberal political economists such as Hayek and Friedman. See Friedman, M. (1962), Capitalism and Freedom, Chicago: Chicago University Press; Gamble, A. (1987), "The Political Economy of Freedom", in Levitas, R. (ed.), The Ideology of the New Right, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 25-54; Hayek, F. (1944), The Road to Serfdom, London: Routledge; King, D. (1987), The New Right, London: Macmillan, pp. 65-69.

50. See Lash, S and Urry, J. (1987), The End of Organised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 1-21; Offe, C. (1985), Disorganised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 1-10.

51. See Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 4, 28-30, 32-34; Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots, London: Edward Arnold, pp. 311-318; Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City, pp. 7-32, Harvey, D. (1989), The Condition of Postmodernity, Oxford; Basil Blackwell, p. 155, 159, 160-161, 186-188.

52. Laclau, E. (1990), New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, London: Verso, pp. xiii-xv.

53. Gramsci, A. (1971), Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Hoare, Q. and Smith, G. (eds.), London: Lawrence and Wishart, p. 360.

54. See Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, London: Verso, pp. 139-141, 179-180.

55. Here I refer to the so-called theorists of capitalist regulation which emerged in France during the 1970s and 1980s. For references see Note 57 below.

56. Marx, K. (1976), Capital, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, p. 275.

57. See Aglietta, M. (1987), A Theory of Capitalist Regulation, London: Verso; Torfing, J. (1991), "A hegemony approach to capitalist regulation", in Bertramsen, R., Thomsen, J., Torfing, J., State, Economy and Society, London: Unwin Hyman, pp. 35-93; Lipietz, A. (1987), Mirages and Miracles: The Crises of Global Fordism, London: Verso; Lipietz, A. The Enchanted World, London: Verso.

58. See Torfing, J. "A hegemony approach to capitalist regulation", pp. 91-93.

59. In this regard, see for example Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, pp. 1-3, 192-193.

60. See Glucksman, A. (1977), "A ventriloquist structuralism", in Western Marxism: A Critical Reader, London: Verso, p. 303; Thompson, E. (1978), The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London: Merlin Press, p. 298.

61. See Giddens, A. (1976), New Rules of Sociological Method, London: Hutchinson, pp. 119-126; Giddens, A. (1979), Central Problems in Social Theory, pp. 44-45.

62. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 243-245, 250-254.

63. ibid., pp. 250-259.

64. Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 105-106; Scott, A. (1990), Ideology and the New Social Movements, pp. 43-53.

65. See Oberschall, A. (1973), Social Conflict and Social Movements, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp. 146-184; Olson, M. (1965), The Logic of Collective Action, Harvard: Harvard University Press, pp. 14-16.

66. See Harloe, M. "Introduction", pp. 16-23; Pickvance, C. (1976), "On the study of urban social movements", in Pickvance, C. (ed.), Urban Sociology: Critical Essays, London: Tavistock Publications, pp. 198-201; Saunders, P. Social Theory and the Urban Question, pp. 206-218, 226-231.

67. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 244.

68. ibid., p. 452.

69. ibid.

70. Castells, M. The Urban Question, p. 453.

71. ibid.

72. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, p. 180.

73. ibid., p. 128.

74. ibid.

75. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 271-272.

76. ibid., p. 273.

77. ibid., pp. 272-273.

78. Castells, M. The Urban Question, pp. 273, 376-378.

79. ibid., p. 433.

80. ibid., p. 376.

81. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, p. 131.

82. ibid.

83. ibid., pp. 131-132.

84. ibid., pp. 179-191.

85. ibid., pp. 142-143.

86. ibid., pp. 142-146.

87. ibid., p. 144.

88. ibid., pp. 148-151, 170-171.

89. ibid., pp. 150-151.

90. Lowe, S. Urban Social Movements, pp. 24-25, 51.

91. Gramsci, A. (1971), Selections from the Prison Notebooks, pp. 229-235.

92. Castells, M. City, Class and Power, p. 151.

93. ibid., pp. 152-166.

94. Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 83-85.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. See Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements, London: Edward Arnold; Castells, M. (1985), "High technology, economic restructuring, and the urban-regional process in the United States", in Castells, M. (ed.),

High Technology, Space and Society, London: Sage Publications; Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban-Regional Process, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

2. Derrida, J. (1978), Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction, Stony Brook: Nicolas Hays, p. 15.

3. See, for example, the criticisms levelled by Dews, P. (1987), Logics of Disintegration: Post-Structuralist Thought and the Claims of Critical Theory, London: Verso, pp. 231-233.

4. See Althusser, L. (1971), Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays, London: New Left Books, pp. 18-19; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1987), "Post-Marxism without apologies", New Left Review, 167, pp. 86-92.

5. Marx, K. (1977), "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy", in McLellan, D. Karl Marx Selected Writings, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 389.

6. See Heidegger, M. (1959), An Introduction to Metaphysics, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 180-181.

7. Heidegger, M. (1962), Being and Time, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 44.

8. See Derrida, J. (1976), Of Grammatology, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins Press, pp. 11-13.

9. Derrida, J. (1978), Writing and Difference, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 279.

10. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 30-44.

11. Derrida, J. Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction, p. 53; Derrida, J. (1981), Dissemination, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 219-220.

12. See Gasche, R. (1986), The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. 177-185, 240-242.

13. Derrida, J. (1981), Positions, Chicago: Chicago University Press, pp. 21-22.

14. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 74-75.

15. See Wittgenstein, L. (1953), Philosophical Investigations, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 5.

16. Saussure, F. (1983), Course in General Linguistics, London: Duckworth Press, pp. 106-109.

17. ibid., pp. 65-69.

18. ibid., pp. 118-120.

19. ibid., pp. 71-74.

20. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 47-48; Derrida, J. Positions, pp. 18-19.

21. Wittgenstein, L. Philosophical Investigations, pp. 3-4, 20-21.

22. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 39-44.

23. ibid., pp. 10-18.

24. Saussure, F. Course in General Linguistics, p. 24.

25. ibid., pp. 24-25.

26. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, p. 34-35.

27. ibid. p. 35.

28. Saussure, F. Course in General linguistics, p. 67.

29. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, p. 44. See also Derrida, J. Positions, pp. 24-26.

30. Saussure, F. Course in General linguistics, p.117.

31. ibid., p. 26. See also Saussure, F. Course in General linguistics, pp. 156-157.

32. See Derrida, J. (1982), Margins of Philosophy, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. 311-316.

33. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 34-44.

34. Saussure, F. Course in General linguistics, p. 26.

35. Derrida, J. Position, pp. 21-22.

36. Derrida, J. Margins of Philosophy, pp. 314-315, 317.

37. Culler, J. (1983), On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism, London: Routledge Kegan Paul, pp. 102-103.

38. See Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 141-144.

39. Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, pp. 88-104; Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, Part 2, Chapter 2.

40. Rousseau, J-J, Essay on the Origin of Languages, cited in Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, p. 144.

41. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, p. 144.

42. ibid.

43. Culler, J. On Deconstruction, pp. 103-107.

44. Gasche, R. The Tain of the Mirror, pp. 185-186.

45. Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, p. 215.

46. Staten, H. (1985), Derrida and Wittgenstein, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, p. 16.

47. See Laclau, E. (1990), New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, London: Verso, pp. 18-26; Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics, London: Verso, pp. 85-88, 105-114.

48. Laclau, E. (1988), "Building a new left: an interview with Ernesto Laclau", Strategies: A Journal of Theory, Culture and Politics, 1, pp. 23-26.

49. Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 140-145.

50. Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, pp. 184-186.

51. Staten, H. Wittgenstein and Derrida, p. 62.

52. See Derrida, J. Of Grammatology, pp. 43-56; 313-316.

53. Derrida, J. Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction, pp. 99-100, 150-153.

54. See Heidegger, M. Being and Time, p. 44.

55. Derrida, J. (1978), Writing and Difference, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 279.

56. See Elliot, B. and Macrone, D. (1982), The City: Patterns of Domination and Conflict, London: Macmillan, pp. 11-14; Harloe, M. (1977), "Introduction" to Harloe, M. (ed.), Captive Cities, London: John Wiley, pp. 10-13; Saunders. P. (1985), Social Theory and the Urban Question, 2nd Edition, London: Unwin Hyman. pp. 174-182.

57. See Benton, T. (1984), The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism, London: Macmillan, pp. 21-22; 229-230; Clarke, S. "Althusserian Marxism", in Clarke, S. (ed.), One Dimensional Marxism, London: Allison and Busby, pp. 7-102; Sayer, D. (1987), The Violence of Abstraction: Analytical Foundations of Historical Materialism, London: Basil Blackwell; Thompson, E. (1978), The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London: Merlin Press.

58. Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, London: Macmillan, p. 181.

59. Laclau, E. (1988), "Building a New Left: an interview with Ernesto Laclau", Strategies: A Journal of Theory, Culture and Politics, 1, pp. 23-26.

60. Bernstein, R. (1976), The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. xxi-xxiv.

61. Keat, R. and Urry, J. (1975), Social Theory as Science, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 9-26.

62. Smelser, N. (1963), Theory of Collective Behaviour, New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

63. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. xxvii-xxi, 339-343.

64. ibid., pp. 291-301.

65. ibid., pp. 311-318.

66. ibid., p. 335.

67. ibid., pp. 340-341.

68. See Wittgenstein, L. Philosophical Investigations, pp. 34, 35, 45.

69. ibid., pp. 80-81.

70. Winch, P. (1958), The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy, London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 24-33, 57-62.

71. See Rorty, R. (1989), Contingency, Irony and Solidarity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. xvi.

72. Laclau, E. (1977), Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, London: New Left Books, pp. 59-62.

73. In this regard I refer to Kuhn's recovery of a hermeneutic approach to the philosophy of science as well as certain French neo-Kantian perspectives. Of course, I am not suggesting that these positions go unchallenged. Popper and Feyerabend have both criticised the Kuhnian perspective from different outlooks. Popper's critique centres on Kuhn's supposed relativism and his rejection of a progressive accumulation of objective scientific knowledge. Feyerabend, on the other hand, while more sympathetic to Kuhn's project, focusses his "anarchist" critique on Kuhn's suggestion that there are always "good reasons" for the choice of one theory over and above another. Bernstein, while recognising the differences between these philosophies of science has, attempted to sketch out the common ground in what he calls these "post-empiricist" accounts of science. For an overview of the French neo-Kantian perspective, in particular the seminal writings of Bachelard and Canguilhem, see Gutting, G. (1989), Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 9-54. For the debates surrounding Kuhnian philosophy of science, see Bernstein, R,

(1983), Beyond Objectivism and Relativism, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 61-71; Feyerabend, P. (1975), Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge, London: New Left Books; Kuhn, T. (1962), The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Chicago: Chicago University Press; Popper, K. (1970), "Normal Science and Its Dangers", in Lakatos, I. and Musgrave, A. (eds.), Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 52.

74. Kuhn, T. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, pp. 66-76.

75. Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, p. 179.

76. Laclau, E. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 19-29.

77. Rorty, R. (1989), Contingency, Irony and Solidarity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-22.

78. Hesse, M. (1980), Revolutions and Reconstructions in the Philosophy of Science, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. 171-172.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements, London: Edward Arnold, pp. xvi-xvii, 301-302.

2. ibid., p. 302.

3. ibid.

4. ibid., p. 304.

5. ibid., p. 305.

6. ibid., p. 291, 304-305.

7. ibid., pp. 303-304.

8. Heidegger makes this distinction in Being and Time. The ontic refers to the given forms whereas the ontological represents the condition of possibility of forms as such. See Poggeler, O. (1987), Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking, Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, p. 35.

9. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 301.

10. See Touraine, A. (1971), The Post-Industrial Society - Tomorrow's Social History: Classes, Conflicts and Culture in the Programmed Society, New York: Random House; Touraine, A. (1981), The Voice and the Eye: an Analysis of Social Movements, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

11. See Touraine, A. The Voice and the Eye: an Analysis of Social Movements, pp. 58, 61, 66, 68.

12. Touraine, A., Hegedus, Z., and Wievorkia, M., (1983), Anti-Nuclear Protest: the Opposition to Nuclear Energy in France, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 40-49.

13. This argument echoes to some extent the later Poulantzas' conception of the capitalist state as a material condensation of political forces. See Poulantzas, N. (1978), State, Power, Socialism, London: Verso, pp. 49-53.

14. Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots, p. 304.

15. ibid., p. 309.

16. ibid.

17. ibid.

18. In this respect, these analyses bear a striking resemblance to the methodological problems which became manifest in Foucault's archaeological approach. Though trying to set out the historical conditions of emergence and existence of the statement, he still outlined a transcendental system of rules - embodied in the episteme, for example - with which to do so. See Dreyfus, H. and Rabinow, P. (1982), Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics, Brighton: Harvester Press, pp. 79-100; Foucault, M. (1972), The Archaeology of Knowledge, London: Tavistock Publishers.

19. See Anderson, B. (1983), Imagined Communities, London: Verso; Jessop, B. (1982), The Capitalist State, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 211-213; Poulantzas, N. (1978), State, Power, Socialism, pp. 20-25.

20. See, for example, Derrida, J. (1976), Of Grammatology, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins Press; Rorty, R. Contingency, Irony and Solidarity, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Vattimo, G. (1988), The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in Post-modern Culture, Cambridge: Polity Press; Wittgenstein L. (1953), Philosophical Investigations, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

21. Wittgenstein, L. Philosophical Investigations, p. 32.

22. Vattimo, G. The End of Modernity, pp. 85-86.

23. Jessop, B. (1982), The Capitalist State, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 213-220.

24. Derrida, J. (1978), Writing and Difference, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 278-293.

25. Showstack-Sassoon, A. (1987), Gramsci's Politics, 2nd Edition, London: Century Hutchinson, pp. 119-125.

26. Gramsci, A. (1971), in Hoare, Q. and Smith, G. (eds.), Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, London: Lawrence and Wishart, p. 366.

27. ibid., p. 168.

28. ibid., pp. 234-235.

29. Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, London: Verso, pp. 136-145.

30. Derrida, J. Writing and Difference, p. 79.

31. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 312.

32. See Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban-Regional Process, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 7-19.

33. Castells, M. and Henderson, J. (1987), "Techno-economic Restructuring, Socio-political Processes and Spatial Transformation: a Global Perspective", in Henderson, J. and Castells, M. (eds.), Global Restructuring and Territorial Development, London: Sage, pp. 2-5, 7-17.

34. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 314.

35. ibid., pp. 314-317.

36. ibid., pp. 315-318.

37. See Aglietta, M. (1987), A Theory of Capitalist Regulation, London: Verso, pp. 125-130, 383-387; Lipietz, A. (1987), Mirages and Miracles: The Crises of Global Fordism, London: Verso.

38. See Aglietta, M. A Theory of Capitalist Regulation, pp. 116-122; Jessop, B. (1983), "Accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects", Kapitalistate, Volume 10/11, pp. 94-97.

39. See Lipietz, A. Mirages and Miracles: The Crises of Global Fordism, pp. 29-47; Torfing, J. (1991), "A Hegemony Approach to Capitalist Regulation", in Bertramsen, R., Thomsen, J., and Torfing, J. State, Economy and Society, London: Unwin Hyman, pp. 90-91.

40. See Jessop, B. Bonnet, K. Bromley, S. Ling, T. (1988), Thatcherism: A Tale of Two Nations, Cambridge: Polity, p. 18; See also Offe, C. (1984), Contradictions of the Welfare State, London: Hutchinson.

41. See Harvey, D. (1989), The Condition of Postmodernity, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 186-188, 196.

42. See Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1987), The End of Organised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 1-21.

43. ibid.

44. Harvey, D. (1982), The Limits to Capital, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; Harvey, D. (1985), The Urbanization of Capital, Oxford: Basil Blackwell; Harvey, D. (1985), Consciousness and the Urban Experience, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

45. Harvey, D. The Condition of Postmodernity, pp. 173-188.

46. By the category of imaginary, I refer to an ideological field which structures discourses in a particular situation by presenting an identity of "full presence" or "objectivity" to subjects experiencing a dislocation in their structural conditions of existence. See Lefort, C. (1986), The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureaucracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism, Cambridge: Polity, pp. 195-204; Laclau, E. (1990), New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, London: Verso, p. 64.

47. Harvey, D. The Condition of Postmodernity, p. 354.

48. In this regard, see Harvey's tentative evaluation of different theories of transition between Fordism and post-Fordism, organised and disorganised capitalism. See Harvey, D. The Condition of Postmodernity, pp. 189-197.

49. See Lowe, S. (1986), Urban Social Movements: The City after Castells, London: Macmillan, pp. 44-48.

50. Castells. M. The City and the Grassroots, pp. 319-323.

51. ibid., p. 314.

52. ibid.

53. Foucault, M. (1981), The History of Sexuality, Volume 1, Harmondsworth: London, p. 93.

54. See Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, pp. 58-59.

55. See Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, pp. 15-16, 17-21; Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 125-127.

56. See Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, pp. 60-67.

57. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 320.

58. Touraine, A. The Voice and the Eye, p. 77.

59. For Derrida's critique of subjectivity, see Derrida, J. (1973), Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, pp. 84-85.

60. Laclau, E. New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, p. 44.

61. See Laclau, E and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 121-122.

62. Lowe, S. Urban Social Movements, pp. 44-48.

63. Castells, M. The City and the Grassroots, p. 326.

Notes to the Conclusion

1. Deleuze outlines this notion of a relay between theory and practice in a discussion with Foucault. See Foucault, M. (1977), Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews, ed. Bouchard, D., Oxford: Basil Blackwel, pp. 205-207.

2. For an overview of post-Marxist positions, see Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, pp. 16-20. For a more sophisticated theoretical account of a post-Marxist stance, see Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (1985), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, London: Verso, pp. 4-5, 142-143; Laclau, E. (1990), New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time, London: Verso, pp. 22-24, 161-162, 191-194.

3. See Aglietta, M. (1987), A Theory of Capitalist Regulation, London: Verso, pp. 116-130; Jessop, B. (1983), "Accumulation strategies, state forms, and hegemonic projects", Kapitalistate, 10/11, pp. 94-98; Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1987), The End of Organised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press; Offe, C. (1985), Disorganised Capitalism, Cambridge: Polity Press.

4. See Mandel, E. (1975), Late Capitalism, London: New Left Books.

5. See Note 3.

6. Boggs, C. Social Movements and Political Power, pp. 40-41; Castells, M. "Urban sociology and urban politics: from a critique to new trends of research", in Walton, J. and Masoti, L. (eds.), The City in Comparative Perspective, New York: Halstead Press, p. 295; Fainstain, S. (1987), "Local mobilization and economic discontent", in Smith, M. and Feagin, J. The Capitalist City: Global Restructuring and Community Politics, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 327-329.

7. See Castells, M. (1977), The Urban Question, London: Edward Arnold, pp. 1, 376-378; Castells, M. (1983), The City and the Grassroots, London: Edward Arnold, p. 309.

8. Boggs, C. Social Movements and Political Power, pp. 38-46; Scott, A. (1990), Ideology and the New Social Movements, London: Unwin Hyman, pp. 13-16; Hirsch, J. (1983), "The Fordist security state and new social movements", Kapitalistate, 10/11, pp. 85-87.

9. See Boggs, C. Social Movements and Political Power, pp. 47-57; Scott, A. Ideology and the New Social Movements, pp. 16-35.

10. See Marcuse, H. (1970), Five Lectures: Psychoanalysis, Politics and Utopia, London: Allen Lane.

11. Habermas, J. (1987), The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 2, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 392; Habermas, J. (1981), "New social movements", Telos, 49, pp. 33-37.

12. See Touraine, A. (1981), The Voice and the Eye: an Analysis of Social Movements, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Touraine, A., Hegedus, Z., and Wievorkia, M., (1983), Anti-Nuclear Protest: the Opposition to Nuclear Energy in France, Cambidge: Cambridge University Press.

13. See Melucci, A. (1980), "The new social movements: a theoretical approach", Social Science Information, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 199-226; Melucci, A. (1984), "An end to social movements?", Social Science Information, Vol. 23, No. 4/5, pp. 819-835; Melucci, A. (1988), "Social movements and the democratization of everyday life", in Keane, J. (ed.), Civil Society and the State, London: Verso.

14. Andrew Gamble provides a useful synopsis of this current, see Gamble, A. (1988), The Free Economy and the Strong State, London: Macmillan, pp. 54-60.

15. See Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 171-175.

16. Miliband, R. (1990), "Counter-hegemonic struggles", Socialist Register, pp. 360-365.

17. Scott, A. Ideology and the New Social Movements, pp. 30, 35.

18. Laclau, E. and Moufe, C. Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, pp. 87, 159-160.

19. See Marx, K. (1964), Pre-capitalist Economic Formations, New York: International Publishers, pp. 77-78; Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1970), The German Ideology, p. 72; Weber, M. (1958), The City, Chicago: Free Press, p. 181.

20. See, for example, Harvey, D. (1989), The Condition of Postmodernity, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 66-98; Jameson, F. (1984), "Postmodernism, or the cultural logic of late capitliasm", New Left Review, 146, pp. 80-85.

21. See, for example, Lynch, K. (1960), The Image of the City, Cambridge: MIT Press; Raban, J. (1974), Soft City, London: Collins Harvill.

22. Castells, M. (1989), The Informational City, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 348-353.

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