

## TIME-SPACES OF DEVELOPMENT

In economic theory it is circumstances that dictate fashion. During the last quarter of the century, years marked by an unprecedented escalation of material production, economists of all persuasions, neoclassicals or Marxists, accorded an important place to theories of growth. Economic reductionism being fundamental, development was likened to growth, which tends to take *pars pro toto* and to ignore the difference between a necessary condition and a sufficient one. Suddenly economic theory, to which mechanical formalization would confer the appearance of an almost scientific rigour, became a powerful argument for the *ideology of growth*.

Reduced to its essential features, this ideology preaches that “more is better” and that all structural problems will end up by being resolved through a quantitative progress. It goes beyond the opposition between the economy of *being* and the economy of *having*<sup>1</sup> and rather than redefining the finalities of development, it concentrates itself on the *instrumentalities* of the increase in

Translated by Michael S. Crawcour.

<sup>1</sup> See on this subject the good book by René Passet (1979).

the offering of goods and services. It ignores qualitative differences, however essential, between *development* and *maldevelopment* which bring in, on the one hand, the degree of the satisfaction of the real social needs of the population and, on the other hand, the social and ecological costs of growth. The national accounting, which is used at present to measure growth, is founded on the notion of value of exchange which encompasses, indistinctly, the values of recognized social usage as such, the pseudo-values of usage which do not give any satisfaction to the consumer save perhaps a status distinction in relation to other consumers, and the "non-values" which constitute in reality a cost of the functioning of the system and not a result.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, in the same way, it accounts for the flux of renewable resources and the consumption of the capital of nature (which is a stock and not a flux), such as the setting apart of ores for example. Other ecological costs of production, such as the destruction of the genetic pool or the degradation of soils because of bad agricultural practices, are simply ignored, pollution constituting a good example of the ecological and social costs which we are only now beginning to take into account, and only very incompletely and to the amount of the cost of depollution.<sup>3</sup>

#### THEORY OF CONSUMPTION AND PLANNING

I would say this: to some things bad is good. Crisis at last! The formidable obstacles, with which the savage pursuit of growth collides in the North, South, East and West, render more plausible both for structural and contingent reasons, the search for new strategies of development, socially more desirable, economically viable and ecologically prudent. The transition from maldevelopment to ecodevelopment<sup>4</sup> makes it necessary to re-

<sup>2</sup> Thus armaments, or hospitals that take care of the victims of road accidents.

<sup>3</sup> Despite their excessive character, the works of Boulding (1978), Georgescu-Roegen (1971), Daly (1977) and Giarrini (1979) have the merit of proposing a new formulation of the principles of economic theory better adapted to deal with the problem outlined above. See also Passet's work already cited and our article, Sachs (1979).

<sup>4</sup> See Sachs (1980).

consider simultaneously finalities and instrumentalities, the structures of consumption in the broader sense of the term, the functions of production and institutional organization.

It is necessary for us to set aside the simplistic solution, which consists in replacing growth with the non-growth of the material product. The stationary State would make no sense except in a perfectly egalitarian society gifted with a powerful production infrastructure, the communist alternative to which Bahro (1979) aspires. In the same way, zero growth of the material product would not automatically bring about the minimization of throughput,<sup>5</sup> that is to say of the flow of energy, of resources and wastes which run through the economy and by virtue of the second law of thermodynamics increase the entropy of the system. The same social satisfaction can give place to some sensibly different levels of throughput depending on the choice of methods of consumption and production techniques, without forgetting that all human activity—even stationary or decreasing—carries with it a throughput. Why then become obsessed with zero growth rate? There is a *non sequitur* between the correct postulate to reduce throughput, that is the ecological costs of growth subordinated to social objectives, and the proposal to bring down material production to a zero rate, which always leaves, it is true, a margin for 'qualitative' growth, centered on the development of services. The real question is to know whether the national accounting, centered on the only flow of market goods and services, offers an adequate framework for arguing about strategies of economic and, even more so, social development. I do not think so.

Logically the question and its *Why?* precede the *How?* The theory of consumption would in such a situation constitute the cornerstone of planning.<sup>6</sup> This is *not*, however, the case, for two reasons at least.

On the one hand the planners have the tiresome tendency of considering that the definition of objectives of development—the only thing which really justifies planning—is not within their competence and comes out of political issues only. Con-

<sup>5</sup> See Daly, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> On the rôle which the theory of consumption in socialist planning ought to play, see Szczepanski (1977).

ceived in this way, the function of the planner is brought down to that of a social accountant guarding the coherence of material balance-sheets, a 'neuter' technician, while he should be a participant engaged with all the population in the political process of choice of finalities, of means and of taking decisions directed towards the future.

But above all one would search in vain for a theory of consumption useful to the planner, or likely to furnish him with the heuristic tools to formulate not answers but good questions on the subject of finalities and objectives of development. Such a theory could not be born in the field of economics, which deals with consumption as a condition certainly necessary, but exogenous to production.

Marxists, who give first place to production, and neoclassicals, who take refuge behind the so-called sovereignty of the consumer, in reality are not interested in the contents of consumption and its effects on consumers. Bertrand Russell noted this in a remarkable essay, written in 1932, which brought him to question the productivist logic common to both capitalist and Soviet systems and founded on the work ethic, which had become an anachronism in an age of plenty (Russell, no date, pp. 9-29<sup>7</sup>). An economist as noted as Scitovski (1976) did not find any other way of reopening the dossier on consumption than by concentrating his attention on the psychological study of the behaviour and satisfaction of the consumer at the price of an impoverishment of the *problematique*. What we really need is an *anthropological theory of consumption*<sup>8</sup> capable both of embracing the continuum of consumption—lifestyles and cultural models—and at the same time of escaping all reductionism, be it economic or psychological. The present *impasse* in studies about the culture of consumption, as Porebski (1977) justly remarks, is due to their division into minute categories and their extremist specialization. Such a theory must therefore confront straight away

<sup>7</sup> With his taste for paradox, he writes: "The morality of work is the morality of slaves, and the modern world has no need of slavery" (p. 14), and to conclude: "Modern methods of production have given us the possibility of ease and security for all; we have chosen, instead, to have overwork for some and starvation for the others."

<sup>8</sup> The recent book by Mary Douglas (1979) is unfortunately a failure. See *à propos* of this, Geoffrey Hawthorn's article (1980).

consumption of market goods and services, those furnished by the public sector, consumption of goods and services produced automatically by the consumers outside the market, and the social time uses. The approach of the Chicago school,<sup>9</sup> which consists in putting a price on time and thus generalizing economic calculation, puts one on a false track because it is inspired by an extremist economic reductionism, unacceptable at the level of philosophical anthropology and given the lie when one observes the behaviour of men and societies. Even if *ex post* it is possible to interpret choices as if they were made with a scalar calculation where everything, including time, has been reduced to a common denominator, the important thing is that we do not go ahead in such a way that the future appears *ex ante* open and many faceted, that we obey various motivations; in short that we are human beings and not computers.

I think, on the contrary, that the two basic postulates of an anthropological theory of consumption are:

1. The existence of a multiple, and not scalar, range of values which forbids interpretation of social and individual behaviour in terms of a maximizing model.<sup>10</sup>
2. The logical and historical priority of cultural models of social times over economic choices which reflects back to the *problematique* suggested by Polanyi (1957) about the different ways in which the economic introduces itself into the social.

As far as the usages of time constitute a good mirror of lifestyles and also of social inequalities,<sup>11</sup> the analysis would seem to offer a good introduction to the subject which interests us here, on condition that it be completed afterwards by other approaches.

#### CULTURAL MODELS OF SOCIAL TIMES

The study of every day man postulated in ethnological history (Le Goff, 1973) and illustrated in the *magnum opus* of Braudel

<sup>9</sup> See Becker (1977) and Lindner (1970) and, for a fundamental critique, Dupuy (1975).

<sup>10</sup> See the critique of Von Neuman's model by G. Bateson (1973).

<sup>11</sup> On inequalities and different social strata in rapport with time, see *La Révolution du temps choisi* (1980).

(1979), the first volume of which is entitled *The Structures of the Everyday*, must bring forth the study of real times<sup>12</sup> or rather social times, the social atomism in which the elementary unit would be the individual being out of place. It is this which limits the scope of studies on time-budgets, otherwise very useful. Encumbered by a vast amount of minute data, they do not arrive at the point of dismounting the social clock of time in such a way as to reveal the hidden architecture of the project of civilization, and even less in seizing its dynamic.

The recent work of Michel de Certeau (1980), dedicated to the invention of the everyday, permits one to understand the stakes and the difficulties of such an enterprise. As a matter of fact the consumers themselves are the sly (and ungraspable, according to the statistics of production and time-budgets) producers, not of real products but of ways of employing products imposed by a dominant economic order. Even if they are dominated, however, it does not follow that consumers are docile or despoiled of creativity. Through the almost microbial operations which proliferate in the interior of technocratic structures, they compose the patchwork of the everyday; playing with the products which the market has delivered to them, they cut out real paths in the jungles of functionalist rationality and create popular cultures. As de Certeau suggestively says, "The everyday is discovered in a thousand ways of poaching (p. 10)."

In other words, time—our basic existential category—is nothing but a bearer of values and activities and it would be risky to formalize the analysis of time-budgets in dissociating the container and the real contents often buried under deceptive appearances. On the other hand, a complication arises in the fact that not all our activities are sequential; some are superimposed on others so that they end up being used in many ways at once, while others are more or less difficult to classify. However, as an introduction to the problem, it is worthwhile distinguishing four major categories of time of society (and of the individual):

— the time of paid professional activities implies a parti-

<sup>12</sup> Guy Thuillier (1977) has dedicated a very thick chapter to the problem. See also William Grossin (1974).

icipation in the work market allowing, on the other hand, the consumer to buy market goods and services;

— the time of economic activities outside the work market defined in a less restrictive way than Faugère does in excluding from it whatever may have potential substitutes on the market of goods and services (Faugère, 1980);

— the time of other activities; recreational, educational, cultural and interrelational;

— the time for rest.

This division is applicable to our modern societies, but its adaptation to other cultures does not present difficulties. It concerns both societies with a market economy and those with a public economy, the category of the work market being common to both. The activities outside the market cover, first of all, the domestic sector and, by extension, the auto-production of goods and services by small communities—communes, neighbourhoods or any other voluntary group that places itself outside the work market. On the other hand the free lending of services at the expense of the public sector (i.e. the ‘outside-the-market’ of goods and services) are the responsibility of paid professionals and therefore, in the proposed classification, belong to the first category. It may be useful for analysis to proceed to a second enlargement of our concept of “outside-the-market” in including the activities of parallel work-markets, formally illegal though more or less tolerated.<sup>13</sup> The whole, thus defined, constitutes the *secret economy* or, at least, statistically not marked out into dimensions, though comparable to the visible economy if one takes their respective parts of social time as a criterion of evaluation. The comparison between the visible and the secret economy cannot be made in terms of value of production because it would be false to ascribe the prevalent salaries on the work market to household activities or even, up to a certain point, to associational or community activities.

If, by *lifestyles*, we mean the combinations of uses of time and of ranges of goods and services obtained through the market or self-produced, the study of cultural models of social times

<sup>13</sup> Moonlight work can of course give place to the production of market goods and services.

appears to be indispensable in comprehending the synchronic and diachronic variety of lifestyles, of factors which condition them and of the field of possible choices in which are to be found projects of society and those, even more diversified, of individuals.

Such a study is yet to be done, or rather the immense amount of material collected by historians, anthropologists, travellers and geographers must be systematized. This would, without doubt, permit one to understand the different ways in which the economic is encased in the social. It would also permit one to cover the big questions with which industrial societies today find themselves confronted: how to profit by the gains of work productivity resulting from technical progress? What future to reserve to the sector outside the market such as has been defined here?

Are we going to continue to produce an unnecessary surplus, producing more market goods and services with the single object of consuming this *accursed part* of the product through a monstrous *potlatch* in which war offers the best opportunity (Bataille, 1967)? In the text already cited, Russell (*op. cit.*, pp. 1617), a perceptive observer armed with good sense instead of economic theory, gives an amusing example, simplified in the extreme though still true of the way in which our economies function. Let us suppose that at one given moment a team of workers produced all the pins the world needed by working eight hours a day. As a result of a certain invention their production doubles from one day to the next. But the demand for pins remains the same: it is not even subject to a lowering of the price. In a reasonable world the producers of pins would cut down to four hours of work a day. However, in real life things happen otherwise. The workers continue to work eight hours, there is an overproduction of pins, some of the enterprises go bankrupt and half of the team of workers ends up by being laid off. Thus, instead of all working less, half of the workers continue to work too hard while the other does not work at all.

Will we allow market production to invade all aspects of life in post-industrial society, to supplant or colonize the inner recesses of the sector outside the market and the recreational sphere?



Will we permit it to deprive us of all autonomy and transform us into robots programmed from outside? Or rather, on the contrary, will we profit from the opportunity which is offered today of sensibly diminishing the time of professional work in self-limiting the appetite for material goods<sup>14</sup> and the affirmation of social status through inequality of consumption, thus transforming free time into a source of new economic and recreational activities placed outside the market and really autonomous?<sup>15</sup> The dual economy model can bring out very diverse and contradictory social realities. In Goodman (1960) (1947) or in Rossi (1977) the concern was to take production of essential goods and services away from the market, to have them produced by all the citizens who would be subjected to a temporary national service, and then distributed free. In Bahro (1979) such a service would be put into operation to ensure hard work in such a way that, in the communist society of his dreams, all other activities might be paid for by a single wage-rate. In others, the dual socio-economic system consists in a juxtaposition of two sub-units; the first integrated into the world-wide economic space, seasoned to international competition and turned constantly towards peak technical progress; and the second, traditional and more convivial in its manners of living, paying for this conviviality by a lesser mobility and by more modest revenues.<sup>16</sup> But how does one not see in this latter version of the dual socio-economic system the lead-up to a real economy and *apartheid society*, where a more and more productive minority would occupy the forefront in confining the “drop-outs” more and more numerous today, in the “convivial” sector, and tomorrow perhaps behind barbed wire? It is useless to insist on the fact that such a concept is situated in the antipodes of those evoked above.

*Time at disposition* is the potential measure of our cultural

<sup>14</sup> “How Much is Enough?” This question posed by two Swedish authors, Backstrand and Ingelstam, has provoked a very rich discussion in Sweden (see *What Now?*, 1975).

<sup>15</sup> Ivan Illich (1979) speaks about vernacular activities in opposing them to the domestic sector colonized by the market sector. For an elaboration of this concept see Joseph Huber (1980).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Amado, J. and Stoffaes, C. (1980).

liberty, and sovereignty over time that of our mere liberty, just as economic surplus constitutes, by definition, the measure of the economic liberty of a society. Nevertheless a gulf separates this theoretical view from the real situation, these potential margins of liberty being heavily hypotheticized by the play of institutions and cultural pressures. To cut short any slight desire for voluntarism, let us look more closely at the dialectic of the constraints/opportunities to which the uses of time are submitted.

#### CONSTRAINTS/OPPORTUNITIES

Firstly, it is useful to mention the body rhythms which recent progress in chronobiology helps us to understand and incites respect in us, even without our having to accept the extremist biologism of sociobiology.<sup>17</sup> The biological restraint evidently becomes operative during recreation time. It ought to be taken into account more at the level of school rhythms (Vermeil, 1976), but also at the level of organization of professional life and of a less brutal passing into retirement.<sup>18</sup>

Secondly, I would introduce *planned and equipped space*, with infrastructures, constructions, instruments of production and consumption. As a matter of fact, all utilization of time implies the temporary or permanent appropriation of planned space,<sup>19</sup> just as access to patrimony and resources: to sleep we must have a house; to work, a workshop or an office equipped with machines and tools and provided with materials; to communicate, some means of communication or transport, etc. We encounter here the traditional problem of economic growth and material civilization, for the present state of organized space and patrimony.

<sup>17</sup> The leader of this school is E.O. Wilson (1975). For a critique coming from anthropology, see Sahlins, M. (1980).

<sup>18</sup> On the problems of time management see the collective works *L'Homme malade de son temps* (1979) and *La Révolution du temps choisi* (1980). For a more fundamental and multidisciplinary analysis of time the obligatory references are the collective works in the edition of Fraser (1972) and of Carlstein, Parkes, and Thrift (1978).

<sup>19</sup> This is what the excellent works of Hägerstrand and his school put in evidence. For an analysis of the contributions of Lund's school see Carlstein, Parkes and Thrift, *op. cit.*, vol. II, entitled *Human Activity and Time Geography*, pp. 115-224.

is the accumulated effect of past growth and of allocations of surplus to different types of investment. But above all, we find ourselves at the heart of the *problematique* of urbanism and land planning, both of which basically ought to be set as starting point for the concept of time-spaces of development. The urbanist and the space planner ought to research into the creation of opportunities for a varied, changing and harmonious usage of social times and make it correspond, as much as possible, to the space organization;<sup>20</sup> in practice, the approach is usually the opposite: one proceeds to space organization without making explicit before hand the uses of time and, so doing, one finishes up by imposing choices of lifestyle through the restraint of the constructed framework whose influence can make itself felt for decades or even centuries. More generally, we should speak of time-spaces, and not space-times of development, thus giving first place to Man who fashions his open history, and giving a possibilist interpretation to the geographical and ecological element.<sup>21</sup>

In the third place, as an appendix to what has already been said at great length about organized and equipped space, one finds *ecological restraint*. The diachronic solidarity with future generations—a necessary complement, but not at all a substitute for the synchronic solidarity expressed in the postulate of social equity—obliges us to pass on an inhabitable world to posterity and the resources necessary to the wellbeing of a much more numerous humanity. The concept of our time-spaces of development must, therefore, guide itself on the principle of ecological prudence and look for a durable symbiosis between Man and the earth (Sachs, 1980).

Fourthly, even more than physical constraints, *cultural pressures* appear, the load of past generations, the cultural models of so-called social times carried by systems of values which in the majority of cases do not correspond to realities but nevertheless continue to weigh heavily on lifestyles. Professional work absorbs today a much lesser part of our time than it did a century ago but, despite this fact, the fundamental rhythms

<sup>20</sup> Wood's book (1974) seems to me close to this conception.

<sup>21</sup> Which aligns itself with the teaching of the French School of Human Geography. See Gourou (1973) on this.

of industrial societies have varied little, everything taken into account, in comparison with the possibilities created by the decoupling of the productivity of work and social conquests.

The fifth constraint/opportunity is *institutional*. Who decides, in reality, the uses of time, the place assigned to market and non-market activities, the range of goods and services produced and then consumed? Is it the organized market forces, the State, the individual, or *civil society*, articulated in a thousand different ways throughout community action, defined by opposition to the State and to the organized world of business and at the same time transcending the simple sum of isolated individuals?

Numerous studies are dedicated to taking to pieces the wheels of society dominated by the formidable coalition of organized market forces, the State and that which Illich (1977) calls the radical monopoly of mutilating professions. In this Orwellian but alas very realistic vision, the dominant coalition keeps hold of the monopoly of communication which gives it an immense power over civil society. In other words the outside-the-market is nothing but an appendix to the market sector, and programmed by it.

By opposing this scheme it is possible to define liberated society. Civil society becomes conscious of its force and place and, in emancipating itself, becomes a *third system of power*, capable of creating its own system of communication and of moderating the omnipotence of the State, the organized market forces and the mutilating professions through the effective exercise of political democracy, the self-management of enterprises, consumer representation in issues responsible for the direction of the economy and social control of science and technology. In short, another power deal sets itself up: a new equilibrium favouring civil society.

Yet another generous but naive Utopia, you will say. Nevertheless, looking at it more closely, civil societies are stirring and articulating themselves in industrial countries and those of the Third World. Under an apparently still surface they are demonstrating dynamism and ingenuity, arriving, here and there, at a point where they can impose solutions to everyday crises which have not been assumed by the institutions theoretically responsible for resolving them. These experiments in real great-

ness have more than a symbolic value or one of punctual experience. They prefigure the future much more than the standstill of the verbal confrontation between the traditional parties of the left and right, or attempts to create on the fringe of society some counter-societies which turn their backs on it.

In particular, they confirm the rôle of local development as an area of mobilization of concrete social imagination and of the active forces of society; as an area also where, in the latter instance, development manifests itself or does not manifest itself. It does not follow that one must neglect the fetters (or aids) in development at a national and international level—on the contrary. It would be vain to pay court to the vision of an archipelago of isolated and self-sufficient communities. But not to make the local echelon at the same time departure point, principle scene and outcome of development would result in denying its humanistic content.<sup>22</sup>

#### TIME FOR LIVING

At this stage of the discussion, and at the risk of complicating it even further, it is necessary to introduce the subjective dimension: the *perception of time* by the individual, the distinction which he is brought to make on the one hand between a psychologically productive time through which his personality is realized and, on the other hand, an unproductive time, indeed destructive to his personality and which, on that account, seems like time to kill. Let us say immediately that the opposition usually made between the alienating work time and disalienating leisure time has but little sense: work can be an occasion for expressing and realizing oneself, an occasion for creativity, while forced leisure spent passively is nothing but a source of stupefaction. For the unemployed or the elderly confined in a home, free time is, in the greater number of cases, a curse, despite

<sup>22</sup> This analysis of the rôle of civil society and of local development is suggested by the works of the International Foundation for Another Development realized in the course of the last two years in the framework of the Third system project: see I.F.D.A., 1980.

the provocative title of one of Illich's works (1977) *Disabling Profession*.

The difficulty which we come up against here is that society can only give *opportunities of time for living* to the individual and prepare him by education taken in its broadest sense, different from school education.<sup>23</sup> But here its rôle finds a barrier, for to seize these opportunities, or *vice-versa* to waste them, depends on the domain of the individual biography. A project of civilization which is not sparing of flexible and multiple articulations with individual projects cannot be anything but totalitarian whatever its ideological inspiration (Sachs, 1978). But at the same time it would be wrong to expect that a project of civilization might result from the sum of individual projects.

The time-spaces of development are created through a collective process of social apprenticeship and liberation. To develop them is, admittedly in the etymological sense of the word,<sup>24</sup> to remove the obstacles which impede this movement and hinder men from utilizing concrete social imagination, from projecting themselves toward the future, from becoming human.

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<sup>23</sup> The concept proposed here is close to that of *life chances* employed by Dahrendorf (1979).

<sup>24</sup> To strip the husk from the corn. By extension, to deploy. But one must be careful not to give an organic connotation to the vocabulary of development, as Dahrendorf quite rightly remarked (*op. cit.*, p. 12): "That people (can) grow is a beautiful expression; though we have to bear in mind that such growth is more than the opening of the seed corn, the breakthrough of the first shoots, their unfolding and blossoming, maturity and death; rather, it is a continuing and permanently incomplete process, a process moreover in which mutations take place and ever new stages of maturity are reached the seeds of which create new starting points which differ in shape from those which had determined their own origins."

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