The Idea of Disurbanity

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Ontology of the Ecumene

Disurbanity will be defined below, in connection with social overhead capital.[1] The hypothesis comprises an ontological plane and a geo-historical plane. The latter makes the body of the present paper. The former, its indispensable foundation, cannot here but be summarized as an introduction.[2] It rests on the idea that the human *being* is not limited to the contour of an individual body, but opens out into a common milieu, the nature of which is eco-techno-symbolic. The whole of human milieux forms the ecumene, which is the relationship of Humankind with the Earth.

This view is founded on three orders of references, which are focussed on the following concepts:

– *Being-out-of-oneself*[3] and *mediance*[4] which mean that human existence is an opening outwards.[5] Mediance (from the Latin *medietas*, half), in particular, means that a 'half' of Being is made up with a milieu.
– *Bodyhood* as the synthesis of a body and a milieu[6] enabling one to consider the latter as a *medial body*, an indissociable extension of the *animal body* in the human species.[7]

– *Worldho*od[8] as embodying a logic of the predicate[9] which means that our *world* is formed by the way we apprehend things. This predication is largely unconscious, since its focus is our animal body.[10]

Needless to say, this ontology is incompatible with modern dualism, which juxtaposes a physical objectiveness with a mental subjectiveness, the latter projecting itself one-sidedly onto the former. The things of the ecumene cannot be reduced to such a relation: neither only objective nor only subjective, they are *trajective.*[11] This is because our world is fraught with our bodyhood, while our body is fraught with our worldhood.[12] Accordingly, in human milieux, there is at the same time a *cosmisation*[13] of the body and a *somatisation*[14] of the world. This bodyhood-worldhood is our mediance.

Cyborg and Disurbanity

As for the geo-historical plane of the hypothesis, it relates to the problematics of *sustainability;* that is, the question of knowing how our civilization could become ecologically viable, which it is not.[15] The perspective is a historical one: it concerns the process which brought forth the present situation.

The two planes of the hypothesis are linked by three postulates:

– The said process is a *loss of scale.* 'Scale' is here understood as that which relates a given size to the human body in its concrete existence; that is in the ecumene, and therefore in the biosphere and on the planet which found it. For instance, in the scalar relation of map to territory, the territory is the size order in which our body lives, whereas it cannot in that of the map. In that way, scale is distinguished from *proportion*, which relates together any sizes without referring to the human one.[16] Accordingly, proportion can be abstracted from our existence, and thus totally objective. Scale remains concrete, and therefore essentially trajective. In the same way, there are proportions between *objects*, with no limits of size; whereas a *thing* is necessarily at a certain scale, concretely qualified on the one hand by the capacities of the human body, and on the other hand by those of the biosphere. Now, in the process which Heidegger called *Entweltlichung* (deworldization), modernity has tended to objectify the things, and therefore to develop abstract systems of objects; that is, the logic of which refers to themselves instead of concrete existence, to which they are imposed rather than they stem from it. Thus, *out-of-scaleness* tends to become the rule, because it is 'objective'.

- The said proces*s is at the same time a fetishization. This Marxian notion was o*riginally applied to commodities: it means that hiding the social relations which have really produced their value invests them falsely with an intrinsic value. Here this meaning is extended to the following. By developing systems of objects for themselves, modernity hides the relations which make them things. It abstracts them from the existential tissue of their milieu (our medial body), reducing it to a physically measurable environment.[17] As this reduction rests on the principle of identity which founds modern science, it eliminates the logic of the predicate which makes the worldhood of things.[18] It deworlds them into objects. By doing so, it invests them falsely with the value which they owe in fact ontologically to our mediance. Thus it fetishizes them; and charging them in that way with an intrinsic value, it leads us to developing them out of scale.
- Out of scale and fetishized, these systems of objects *change the direction of* technic: rather than deploying the functions of the human body, it dictates its own functionality to human life.[19] Then appears Cyborg: *a being which is mechanized by its mechanical world.*

This change of direction motivates the present research. The question is not whether technic is good or bad in itself. Such a question belongs to a mere logic of identity. This, by definition, abstracts it from the ecumene, in which this logic is necessarily combined with a logic of the predicate.[20] A knife is good *when* one cuts meat, it is bad *when* one cuts one's finger. What it is a thing is neither only objective nor only subjective, but trajective; that is, *tuned in to our body in the contingency of history.*[21] Now, systems of objects hide their meaning, which is a matter of things, not of objects.

This problem concerns our whole civilization. It is too vast to form in itself the object of a definite research. Therefore, I shall here consider only one of its aspects, relating to the question of settlements, particularly that of urban sprawl.[22] The thesis which I intend to uphold is the following. This paradigmatical expression of contemporary systems of objects: the coupling of Automobile and Cottage, which makes cities explode, is not sustainable.[23] It is not, because it tends to abstract itself from any scale, both from the ethical and political point of view of the human polity and from the ecological point of view of the biosphere.

This unsustainability[24] can be illustrated with the parable of the Delivery Trucks:

Recently combined with the couple of Automobile and Cottage, the system of objects of the Computer has brought forth *e-urbanization*, which goes in pace with *e-commerce*; that is, the faculty of ordering through the Internet any commodity at home,

including adopted children. In its logic, such a system makes retailers, cities and even suburban malls useless. Accordingly, it makes it possible to live close to nature. At the same time, as it frees commodities from the frictions of externalities, it also makes it possible to actualize the ideal of market liberalism. Understandably, it does not lack supporters. Yet, in the reality of the ecumene, this system requires to multiply the social overhead capital[25] of cities by the number of individual consumers. Indeed, the book which formerly was bought by one hundred pedestrians at a single bookshop in a single street in a single town, now has to be dispatched by one hundred Delivery Trucks to one hundred Cottages disseminated in Nature at the end of one hundred Roads.[26]

Such is the logic of Cyborg's systems of objects, which also is the logic of absolute market. This *market absolutism = machine absolutism* abstracts both the commodity and the consumer from the ecumene, that is at the same time from the biosphere and from the polity.[27] Clearly, this logic is neither *eco*logical nor *socio*logical. Unsustainable at least on a living Earth, it therefore structurally *needs the desert.*

The Cottage in the Landscape

I am considering the main figure of this system: the Cottage. It is indeed for serving its Cottage that Cyborg buys its machines; it is for staying in its Cottage that it orders on the Internet, and it is for living in its Cottage that it escaped from the city. What then is the glamour of the Cottage? It is *to be close to Nature.*

Now, the parable of the Delivery Trucks has shown us that this system destroys its very object. Why then does Cyborg want the Cottage? This is firstly because Cyborg lives in a predicate brought forth by the *Fordian revolution*[28] in which mass consumption of individual goods (e.g. Ford cars and Misawa Homes cottages) tends asymptotically to replace the social overhead capital which cities used to exalt. Indeed, toward the horizon of the asymptote, you do not even need roads: as the Four-Wheel Drive Toyota Land Cruiser parked in front of the Cottage proclaims in bold letters on the cover of its prominent spare wheel (the emblem of wilderness), *INTO THE NATURE!*[29]

One can see here that the Fordian predicate is itself subtended by another predicate, that which the Land Cruiser points at: *'the' Nature.* Yet, the Fordian revolution was decisive. Before it, indeed, living in the wilderness was the special feature of hermits; that is, one could have access to the solitudes of the desert (uninhabited land, in Greek *eremos*, hence 'hermit') only by giving up the goods of the ecumene (inhabited land). Thus, one could be a hermit only at the price of frugality, which as a matter of fact started eremitic asceticism. As the reverse of the ecumene, the *ereme*[30] was that which freed you from the world, and especially from the city.

Henceforth, on the contrary, Cyborg frees itself from the city to the very degree of its consumption of goods. By so doing, to be sure, it disrupts nature, insofar as it multiplies anthropic pressure on the ecosystems; but this is hidden by Cyborg's fetishes, which even procure it on the contrary the feeling that the more numerous and splendid its machines are, the deeper it lives 'into the Nature'.

Living closer to nature, this is indeed Cyborg's basic motivation. Where does it get it from? From predicates devolved upon it by history, and which, in the West, have converged into the paradigm of the American suburb. These predicates make our world. They motivate modern disurbanity. They have been rather well assessed.[31] Yet there is one, the range of which has not been sufficiently acknowledged by historiography: that by dint of which was instituted, for the first time in human history, namely in Southern China under the Six Dynasties (IIId-VIth c. AD), the aesthetic couple *Landscape-Cottage*. As a matter of fact, Cyborg's world is incorporated on the aesthetic plane; because what it is seeking for, above all, is landscape: *the look of nature.*[32]

How, in this respect, since the Six Dynasties, was hollowed out the *semantic basin*[33] which Cyborg is now living in, this is the question. It comprises that of a possible transmission of the landscape predicate from China to mediaeval Europe, which must be considered but remains hypothetic.[34] My own research is about the moral foundations of the Landscape-Cottage couple, which not only links ethics and aesthetics, but implies a whole worldview. The Six Dynasties are an epoch of political unrest, and that of a fecund intercourse between Taoism, Bouddhism (a newcomer) and Confucianism, which had lost the position of an orthodoxy it had under the Han. It is poets who then have invented the notion of landscape (*shanshui*)[35] and it is also a poet, Tao Yuanming (365–427), who established the paradigm of the return to authenticity (*zhen*) in the 'woven hut' (*jie lu*) at the outer limit of the fields, after having escaped from the city.[36]

What I want to make clear[37] are the moving forces of this feeling of authenticity, which Tao Yuanming, exactly to the reverse of his contemporary Augustine, experienced in the landscape, from the side of his small garden: *ci zhong you zhen yi*, 'here is true meaning'.[38]

The Desert, the Frontier, and Xinjiang

By alluding to Saint Augustine, I mean that doing such a research will be to set a perspective. It does not aim at adding another room to the building we owe to the specialists of the Six Dynasties[39] which would be to close a worldhood upon itself in the culturalist way; but, on the contrary, at understanding how the world which was set at that time in fact lives on and imbues our own. This impregnation was made through aesthetics, toward present East Asia on the one hand[40] and toward the Occident on the other

hand, by the agency of the Jesuits and of personages like William Chambers (1723–1796).[41] On this side, then, the question will be to clarify the way in which a confluence was performed between this oriental influx (manifested among others in 'Sharawadgi' taste) and the heritage of the classic pastoral; a confluence which nurtured the art of parks in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries, and from thereon conditioned the view which the Europeans and above all the Americans have had of the Home, with the myth of the house close to nature.[42]

This confluence the compost in which Cyborg's Cottage germinated must be analysed as such, not from the single point of view of the sole Western history. Accordingly, the method can only be a systematically parallel scrutiny of the two flows, that which comes from Greco-Roman Antiquity and that which comes from China. As such a task is enormous, one should focus it on certain themes, certain works and certain figures[43] and therefore it cannot but be collective (see 5).

Personally, I intend to deepen the comparison of the *ecumene/ ereme* contrastive structure in East Asia on the one hand, in the West (Europe and North America) on the other hand. Here interfere several referential fields. The *ecumene in general* combines World (logic of the predicate: *lgP*) and Earth (logic of the subject: *lgS*), the World being that which predicates the Earth; i.e. *lgS/lgP*. This predication (worldization) applies to all the aspects of the Earth, including deserts in all the acceptations of this term. Within this relation but at another level, though, the *ecumene in particular*, as 'inhabited land' (*oikoumenê gê*), is opposed to ereme as 'the uninhabited'; that is the wilderness of forests, mountains, seas, arid and cold deserts. The general ontological structure of the ecumene is necessarily expressed in the terms of this contrast, at the particular level of a given milieu or a given world; e.g. Six-Dynasties China, or XXIst c. United States. As a matter of fact, the ereme is there the concrete metaphor of an unpredicable absolute: that which, in the abstract relation lgS/lgP, would be lgS itself, i.e. Truth, un-veiled (*a-lêtheia*) of any worldly predicate and beyond any contingency. Eremitism, in the Orient as in the Occident, consists in seeking for this absolute in the ereme.

However, in the contingency of history and the concreteness of human milieux, World and Earth touch each other[44] and grow together[45] by dint of a certain horizon, which limits both and makes them indispensable to one another; that is, ereme and ecumene here are correlates: they exist as a function of each other, concretely, *in the motifs of a milieu and the motivations of a history.* In that of the United States, for example, the ereme (wilderness) was identified with the West. It was positive, as the Frontier, an attribute of American identity which later was applied even to the conquest of the Moon and now is applied to the *edge city*, i.e. to the paradigm of Cyborg's habitat.[46] On the contrary, in neighbouring Canada, the

ereme lies rather to the North, which is negative: at the end of that ereme, there is flatly death, not California.[47] In mediaeval Europe as in China, the main motif of the ereme was the wooded mountain[48]. Yet in China, the ereme was also the Western Areas, *Xiyu*, with their stretches of sterile *gebi*[49] but with their oases as well, which, along the piedmonts of the Tianshan and the Kunlun, led to other worlds.

Most of the time, though, people are not in quest of the absolute. Like Tao Yuanming or like Horace, they are satisfied with the amenity of a countryside in the way of anti-worldliness. Therefore, it is rather on this side than among true anchorites that I should see the main source of contemporary disurbanity. Nevertheless, cultivated though it may be, the countryside, in relation to the city, plays here the role of the ereme in relation to the ecumene; anyway, it is as 'nature' that it exists for Cyborg.[50] The ground of the structure is indeed the relation of ereme to ecumene, and the analysis must be pressed on down to that level.[51]

I intend in that way, again from a comparative point of view, to examine how was organized in China the predicate of the ereme, in its double version of wooded mountain (*shan*) on the one hand, and of Western Areas on the other hand. In the misty recesses of the *shan* hides the Obscure Female, *Xuan Pin*, a cosmic life-giving principle, and in the *shan* of the West, the Kunlun, reigns the Queen Mother of the Occident, *Xiwangmu*, an immortal who possesses the elixir of life. The Travel to the West, *Xiyouji*, is a classic of Chinese fantasy.[52] The thing will be on the one hand to see how functioned the imagery of this fantasy[53] and on the other hand to see how, correlatively, was organized the Chinese presence in the Western Areas; for instance, in the region of Luntai, through the settling of *tuntianbing* (colonial troops), the model of which in Japanese *tondenhei* was adopted by the Meiji government, two thousand years later, for colonizing the Northern Island, Hokkaido.[54]

The rough history of the colonization of the Western Areas leads to the present problematics of sustainable development, since Xinjiang the Chinese West is now the object of a policy of development by forced marches. In this sense, while the traffic there is still widely made by donkey cart (*lüche*), the problem meets that of Cyborg; and although the Tarim River[55] flows far away from the Seine and the St Lawrence, it is their common basin which I would like to put into light.

Synergies

Exploring the semantic basin of Cyborg's Cottage can in this way lead up to the sources of the Tarim River. That is, to the Karakorum, in Sanskrit *Krishnagiri* (Black Mountain), which phonetically gave the Chinese *Qiaogeli* (i.e. the Dapsang or K2), and semantically perhaps also the Turkish *Karakorum*. This blackness is the unknown of research. Indeed, light has been shed only on the outskirts

and on some landmarks here and there in this immense basin. It is certain that I shall never climb up the Dapsang, and that I shall never be able to do all of this research alone. This is why, from the start, I conceived of it as a co-operative project. At the present stage, some collaborations have already been assured; some others are probable, others yet possible. Taking stock of them now would be premature[56] but it has already been decided that my own work will be connected with Mr Lu Qi's researches on sustainability (in general) and on the reclamation of Luntai (in particular)[57] together with Ms Cynthia Ghorra-Gobin researches on the myth of the individual house in the United States.[58] In that way, a heuristic axis will be functioning between East Asia, Europe and North America; but I wish other cultural areas to join with it.[59]

In the same intention, I wish future doctoral researches to be undertaken on related themes in the frame of the doctoral course (DEA) and laboratory *Jardin Paysages,Territoires* (Gardens, Landscapes, Territories) in Paris, under my own tuition or that of my colleagues.

As a matter of fact, I think that the time has come for history and geography to meet again[60] in order to think together the concreteness and the contingency of their common object: human evolution on the Earth.

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Notes

1. I use this locution with a wider meaning than its ordinary acceptation in economics. The social overhead capital of the city does not only consist in material collective goods (such as buses, sewage systems etc.), but also in the social relationships which make urbanity, thus enabling humans to live in large numbers in a common space (the city). Correlatively, I understand *disurbanity* as a dilapidation of this physical and moral capital.
2. I have developed it in *Écoumène. Introduction à l'étude des milieux humains* (Ecumene: Introduction to the Study of Human Milieux), Paris: Belin, 2000 (Japanese translation *Fuudogaku josetsu* forthcoming at Chikuma, Tokyo in late 2001), where more detailed references will be found. The present research, in its turn, intends to develop some of the perspectives outlined in the last chapter of this book.

3. Translating Heidegger's *Ausser-sich-sein.*
4. Translating Watsuji's *fuudosei.*
5. The Latin etymology of *existence* combines *ex* (outwards) with *sistentia*, from *sistere*, to stand.
6. This view refers to Merleau-Ponty on the one hand, to Lakoff and Johnson on the other hand.
7. This view refers to Leroi-Gourhan, who, though, does not speak of a *medial body* but of a *social body* (corps social), constituted with the technical and symbolic systems which in the human species extend the *animal body.* 'Medial' on the other hand expresses that this technosymbolic extension of the animal body is necessarily also ecological, as it opens out into the ecosystems of the environment (and by this very fact turns it into a properly human *milieu*).
8. Translating Heidegger's *Weltlichkeit.* Yet and this is the problem of *scale* the mediance of the ecumene cannot be reduced to the worldhood of the world, because, supposing the biosphere which in its turn supposes the planet (while the reverse is not true), it necessarily partakes, also, in the *universalness* of the physical.
9. Translating Nishida's *jutsugo no ronri.* Nishida also makes use in the same sense of *basho no ronri* (logic of place). For more details on this logic, see Augustin Berque and Philippe Nys (ed.) *Logique du lieu et oeuvre humaine* (Logic of Place and Human work), Brussels: Ousia, 1997; and Augustin Berque (ed.) *Logique du lieu et dépassement de la modernité* (Logic of Place and the Overcoming of Modernity), 2 volumes, Brussels: Ousia, 2000. The essence of the logic of the predicate is metaphorical: *S is P* violates the principle of identity *A is not non-A.*
10. In the sense that, on the one hand (as Merleau-Ponty has shown on the grounds of clinical neurophysiology) the body predicates its environment into a behavioural milieu (*milieu de comportement*) and that, on the other hand (as Lakoff and Johnson have shown on the grounds of cognitive science) it predicates thought through sets of 'primary metaphors'.
11. From the Latin *trans* (across) and *jacere* (throw), hence *trajectio*, crossing. *Trajection* is the existential intercourse which the Being of the human maintains with the things of its environment, and which makes that these are not mere 'objects'. They are properly *things*, combining historically a logic of identity (A is not non-A) and a logic of the predicate (S is P); in other words, what they are in themselves and what they are for us. An object falls only within a logic of identity, which amounts to negating human existence and history.
12. Which, related with our animal body, makes us *persons* (from the Latin *persona*, mask), who predicate their Being in terms of consciousness, but nevertheless suppose their animality,

and therefore the biosphere. In this complex reflexiveness, the human Being is both the predicate and the subject of itself, in several ways and at several levels: not only *je est un autre* ('I is another one', Rimbaud), but also *entre moi et moi-même, il y a la Terre* ('between me and myself, there is the Earth', Besse).

13. From the Greek *kosmos*, world. The anthropomorphism of world representations in 'exotic' societies, for example, expresses this cosmisation.

14. From the Greek *sôma*, body. The so-called 'psychosomatic' effects in modern medicine, for example, are often rather *cosmosomatic* effects, in that they express the interrelationship of animal bodies and the medial body in human societies.

15. The notion of sustainability, or of *sustainable development*, spread in the eighties, notably after a report of the Brundtland Commission (WCED) of the United Nations published in 1983, the main idea of which was to leave a livable environment to the future generations.

16. This difference between scale and proportion was foreboded by Viollet-le-Duc. It has been put into light by Philippe Boudon's works, from *Sur l'espace architectural. Essai d'épistémologie de l'architecture* (On Architectural Space: Essay in the Epistemology of Architecture), Paris: Dunod, 1971 to (ed.) *De l'architecture à l'épistémologie. La question de l'échelle* (From Architecture to Epistemology: the Question of Scale), Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991.

17. This distinction between milieu (*fuudo*) and environment (*kankyou*) was established by Watsuji Tetsurô in *Fuudo* (1935). In other words, modernity reduces human milieux to Descartes' *extensio.* From the point of view of mediance, this reduction is a shutting out (*forclusion*) of 'half' of our Being, i.e. of our medial body, thus reduced to the objects of *extensio.* Hence a ' want-of-Being ' (*manque-à-être*), in which I see the fundamental motivation of the consumption of these objects, which from thereon are standing for it.

18. See above, note 8. Thus the *world* is replaced by a *universe* abstracted from human existence. This is nothing else than Descartes' *extensio*, bereft as Descartes had indeed seen it of the 'feeling' (*sentiment*) which is our very life' (*notre vie même*). For Descartes, this abstraction was necessary only for 'pure science'; but the systems of objects of modernity have extended it to all the aspects of existence.

19. This reversal had been viewed as a risk by Leroi-Gourhan. It was indeed one of the possible results of the 'exteriorization' of the functions of the animal body by technics. After the 'prefrontal event, biological evolution did not keep pace with technical progress; then 'technic (…) seems to exteriorize itself completely and, as it were, to live its own life' (*Le Geste*

et la parole[Gesture and Speech], Paris: Albin Michel, 1964, volume I, p. 169).

20. The logic of identity is a logic of the subject (lgS) as opposed to that of the predicate (lgP). LgS can only grasp abstract objects, not concrete things, which belong to the relation lgS/lgP (i.e. reality). See above notes 9 and 18.

21. As I cannot argue this thesis in the present paper (I did in the book referred to in note 2), let us here consider it as a postulate.

22. I owe the idea of relating the figure of Cyborg with the question of urban sprawl to Antoine Picon, *La ville territoire des Cyborgs* (The Territorial City of the Cyborgs), Besançon: Les Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 1998. Picon's standpoint is different, though, as I have commented in 'Cybèle et Cyborg: les échelles de l'écoumène' (Cybele and Cyborg: the scales of the ecumene), *Urbanisme*, 214 (Sept.-Oct. 2000), 40–42. The same issue contains several articles relating to the question of the sustainable city.

23. This phenomenon, though most conspicuous in the United States, tends to follow individual motorization everywhere. In the French case, see Geneviève Dubois-Taine and Yves Chalas (eds.) *La ville emergente* (The Emerging City), La Tour d'Aigues: Éditions de l'Aube, 1997.

24. Needless to say, I am not alone in advocating such a thesis. For more detailed argumentations, see for instance Guy Mercier and Jacques Béthemont (eds.) *La ville en quête de nature* (The City in Search of Nature), Sillery (Québec): Septentrion, 1998.

25. See footnote 1.

26. True, Cyborg is fond of devising routes which optimize the circuit of its Delivery Trucks; but this changes nothing to the logic of its system: substituting the individual to the collective, and therefore multiplying anthropogenic impact on the biosphere; which, in the end, leads to the desert. By the way, the use of capitals here indicates the fetishization of the system.

27. Indeed, this logic breaks down at the same time the city and fellow citizenship. The motif of the 'village community' which Cyborg often invokes is a chimaera. For an analysis of precise sociological studies on this question, see Michel Conan's contribution to Augustin Berque (ed.) *Urbanité française, Urbanité nippone, vol. II: La Maîtrise de la ville* (French Urbanity, Japanese Urbanity, vol. II: Urban Control), Paris: Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1994. This chimaera, on the contrary, leads to segregation, notably on racial (i.e. naturalistic) grounds. This can already been observed clearly in the average socio-spatial structure of the USA, where the lighter your skin, the farther you live from the city core, and the darker, the closer. See the statistics

p. 97 in Cynthia Ghorra-Gobin, *La ville Américaine, espace et société* (The American City: Space and Society), Paris: Nathan, 1998.

28. In the sense of a reversal, like when one speaks of the Copernican revolution. Economists have celebrated the obsequies of fordism too early; in fact, it imbues our world so deeply that one does not see it anymore. Needless to say, the Fordian revolution occurred in the wake of the bourgeois revolution, which as a general trait has tended to reduce the human to the modern *topos* 'animal body: individual person'. For instance, privatizing commons has substituted an 'I possess this object' to a 'We are this medial body'. On this topic, see *op. cit.* in note 2.

29. This is a Japanese example (hence the solecism), but Cyborg also makes use of other makes of Four-Wheel Drives, and its cottage is not necessarily located in Izumi Park Town. The fastest growing category of vehicles in rich countries is the SUV (Sport and Utility Vehicle), that is the big FWD which one uses for shopping at the mall. For any self-respecting Cyborg, the SUV is today an indispensable attribute of the Cottage, together with the Sedan and the Mini. Indeed, the SUV enables Cyborg to assuage its structural need of desert, because it is of the same make as the machines of the Paris-Dakar Race (Cyborg's eucharistic rite, celebrating its consubstantiality with the Machine, the Market and the Desert).

30. I have analysed this contrastive structure in *Le sauvage et l'artifice. Les Japonais devant la nature*, Paris: Gallimard, 1997 (1986)[English edition *Japan: Nature, Artifice and Japanese Culture*, Yelvertoft Manor: Pilkington, 1997; Japanese edition *Fuudo no Nihon: bunka to shizen no tsuutai*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobou, 1988, and Chikuma Gakugei Bunko, 1992]; and more recently in *Les Déserts de Jean Verame* (Jean Verame's Deserts), Milan/Paris: Skira/Seuil, 2000 ('Erêmos', p. 15–31). The Greek *eremos*, like the Latin *eremus* and the Gascon *herm*, comes from an Indo-European root *er*, meaning separation.

31. Let us, for the record, only mention four titles, complementary to each other: Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the Eighteenth Century,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967; V. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973; K. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: the Suburbanization of the United States*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1985; and Georges Teyssot (ed.), *The American Lawn*, New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

32. One can be convinced of this by reading Pierre Donadieu (photographs by Gérard Dalla Santa), *Campagnes urbaines* (Urban Countrysides), Arles and Versailles: Actes Sud and

École Nationale Supérieure du Paysage, 1998; as well as Bertrand Hervieu and Jean Viard, *Au bonheur des campagnes (et des provinces)* (To the Happiness of Countrysides, and of Provinces), La Tour d'Aigues, Éditions de l'Aube, 1997, who show that it is landscape which nowadays cements French territoriality. Starting from different premisses, this is in fact the same purport as Picon's.

33. The notion of *bassin sémantique* is due to Gilbert Durand, who notably used it in regard of Pelagius' heritage in *Introduction à la mythodologie. Mythes et sociétés* (Introduction to Mythodology: Myths and Societies), Paris: Albin Michel, 1996.

34. For a recent inquiry, see Hidemichi Tanaka, 'Leonardo da Vinci's landscapes and Chinese influences', p. 73–76 in Heliana Angotti Salgueiro (ed.), *Paisagem e arte. A invençao da natureza, a evoluçao do olhar* (Landscape and Art: the Invention of Nature, the Evolution of the Eye), Sao Paulo: Comitê Brasileiro de Historia da Arte, 2000.

35. In particular Xie Lingyun (385–433). See Obi Kouichi, *Shareiun, kodoku na sansui shijin* (Xie Lingyun, the lonely poet of landscape), Tokyo, Kyuuko Shoin, 1983. More generally, see Donald Holzman, *Landscape Appreciation in Ancient and Early Medieval China: the Birth of Landscape Poetry*, Hsin Chu (Taiwan), National Tsinghua University, 1996.

36. Much has been written on Tao Yuanming, who in East Asia is much more alive than Horace, Hesiod or Virgil are in the West. See in particular Ishikawa Tadahisa, *Tou Enmei to sono jidai* (Tao Yuanming and his epoch), Tokyo: Kenkyuu Shuppan, 1994.

37. For the moment, I have only cleared the outskirts of the question; see Augustin Berque, *Les Raisons du paysage. De la Chine antique aux environnements de synthèse* (The Reasons of Landscape, from Ancient China to Synthetic Environments), Pari: Hazan, 1995; 'En el origen del paisaje' (At the origins of landscape), *Revista de Occidente*, 189 (Feb. 1997), 7–21; 'El nacimiento del paisaje en China' (The birth of landscape in China), p. 13–21 in Javier Maderuelo (ed.), *El Paisaje: arte e naturaleza* (Landscape: Art and Nature), Huesca, Ediciones La Val de Onsera, 1997; 'Paysage à la chinoise, paysage à l'européenne', p. 61–69 in Jean Mottet (ed.), *Les paysages du cinéma* (The Landscapes of Cinema), Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1999.

38. Verse 9 in Tao Yuanming's famous poem *Yin jiu* (Drinking), 5.

39. Except referring to the Chinese texts when it comes to the most significant notions, my own research will rely mainly on the works of Japanese sinologists, whose bibliography on the Six Dynasties is enormous.

40. The aesthetic theme of the hermitage, established under the Six Dynasties, was transmitted to Japan through the poets

of the Tang dynasty (Bo Juyi in particular). There, it brought forth, among others, the *sukiya* architectural style of tea pavilions (*chashitsu*), and influenced in many respects the Cottage-Garden couple which nowadays proliferates in Japanese suburbs. I intend to clarify this descent, which I have outlined in *Du Geste à la cité. Formes urbaines et lien social au Japon*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobou, 1993 (English edition *Japan: Cities and Social Bonds*, Yelvertoft Manor: Pilkington, 1997; Japanese edition *Toshi no Nihon. Shosa kara kyoudoutai e*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobou, 1996) and in 'Destin, au Japon, de la *garden city* howardienne' (Destiny of the Howardian garden city in Japan), p. 147–162 in Ignacy Sachs (ed.) *Quelles villes, pour quel développement* (Which cities, for which development?), Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996.

41. Chinese gardens were known of through the Jesuits, but it is William Chambers' books on Chinese architecture and gardens which definitely influenced the creation of parks in the English style.

42. See below, §5 and note 58.

43. For instance, it should be fruitful to compare the purport of the *Bao pu zi* (The Master who Embraced Simplicity), a work by Ge Hong (284–364) which deeply influenced Chinese eremitism (*yindun*), with that of anchoreticism in early Christian times. The least one can say is that the latter's *contemptus mundi* (contempt of the world) was not prone to landscape aestheticism; but one has to go beyond too simple oppositions. In a context and with referents which at first may seem antipodal, there are for instance subtle congruences between the predestination of saints as it appears in the arguments exchanged between Augustine and Pelagius on the one hand, and the achievements of Taoist immortals (*xian*) as exposed in the *Bao pu zi* on the other hand. On the former, see B.R. Rees, *Pelagiu: life and letters*, Woodbridge: the Boydell Press, 1991; on the latter, see Murakami Yoshimi, *Hou boku shi* (The *Bao pu zi*), Tokyo: Meitoku Shuppan, 1967.

44. In Latin *cum-tangere*, hence *contingency*. This essential contingency is for instance symbolized by the ambivalence of *mundus* (a sacred hole in the earth) = *mundus* (the world = *kosmos*) at the foundation of a city in Roman times. *Kosmos*, the World, is the predicate of the Earth, this subject (*subjectum* in Latin, i.e. 'thrown under' = *hupokeimenon* in Greek, i.e. 'laid under') which 'lies under the sky' (*hupo tô kosmô…keimenê*, Isocrates, 78); a sky-predicate which is at the same time Order, Ornament and World – the three meanings of *kosmos* in Greek (as well as three of those of *mundus* in Latin)] since *kosmos* = *ouranos* (sky), as is stressed in the last sentence of Plato's *Timaios.* As a matter of fact, the *templum* of the foundation of a Roman city consists in projecting a

portion of the sky onto the earth, i.e. in instituting, through this predication (*cum-templatio*) a new ecumene[*eco-*, from *oikos*, house, comes from a radical *weik*, inhabit, which has also given the French *ville*, city *Contemplatio* hence has taken the sense of 'consideration', which indeed consists in seing things in a certain way, that is in predicating S into a certain P, Earth into a certain World. For example, for the Byzantines, *hê oikoumenê* meant the Christian world.

45. In Latin *cum-crescere,* hence *concreteness.* This essential concreteness is for instance symbolized by the mutual begetting of territory, myth and dream among the Aborigines of the Red Centre of Australia. On this topic, see Sylvie Poirier, *Les Jardins du nomade. Cosmologie, territoire et personne dans le désert occidental australien* (The Nomad's Gardens: Cosmology, Territory and Person in the Australian Western Desert), Münster: LIT Verlag, 1996.

46. The subtitle of Joel Garreau's famous book, *Edge city* (1991), is indeed *Life on the New Frontier*. The edge city is the noble forehead of suburban sprawl, which, besides, Brian J.L. Berry has upgraded to *e-urbanization.*

47. As stresses Gaile McGregor, *The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Langscape*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985. N.B. *langscape* reveals that the matter is indeed about a predication.

48. See for instance Laurence Meiffret, 'L'ermite et la montagne dans l'art médiéval, XIIIe–XVIe siècles' (Hermits and mountains in mediaeval art, XIIId–XVIth c.', p. 107–152 in *La Montagne et ses images, du peintre d'Akrésilas à Thomas Cole* (Mountain and its Images, from the Painter of Akresilas to Thomas Cole).

49. The *gebi* are stony and barren stretches of land. This word has given the toponym Gobi. *Gebi* are Cyborg's delight: there it feels really at home, since it can drive without roads (see above, note 29).

50. See above, §3 and particularly notes 29, 31, 32. Cyborg does'nt get on with farmers, those ereme-busters.

51. I postulate therefore that in order to understand the couple of Landscape and Cottage, one has to study the thought of hermites. In this respect, I refer first to Kagurazaka Masatoshi, *Chuugoku ni okeru in'itsu shisou no kenkyuu* (Research on the thought of eremitism in China), Tokyo: Pelikansha, 1993. The theme of 'retreating to the desert' (in Japanese *inton*, i.e. the Chinese *yindun*) has been a remarkable motif and a motivation in the history of Japanese suburbs. On this topic, see Higuchi Tadahiko, *Kougai no fuukei. Edo kara Toukyou e* (Landscapes of the Suburb: from Edo to Tokyo), Tokyo: Kyouiku Shuppan, 2000.

52. Dating from the Ming Dynasty, it is still very popular. I have bought my own copy from a pavement bookshop in Kashgar in 2000, but I had read before, in 1960, René Grousset's *Sur les traces de Bouddha* (On Buddha's Footsteps), Paris: Plon, 1929, which relates Xuan Zang's journey to India in the VIIth c. the origin of this story –, and in the eighties, my children were fond of *Dragon Ball*, a Japanese interpretation of the *Xiyouji* in *manga* (comics), now also widely diffused in the world by the television.

53. In particular by exploiting Isobe Akira's huge work *'Saiyuuki' keiseishi no kenkyuu* (Research on the History of the Formation of the *Xiyouji*), Tokyo: Soubunsha, 1993.

54. See Augustin Berque, *La Rizière et la banquise. Colonisation et changement culturel à Hokkaidô* (Ricefield and Icefield: Colonization and Cultural Change in Hokkaido), Paris: Presses Orientalistes de France, 1980. The matter will also be, correlatively, to compare the North in Japanese history with the West in Chinese history. The word *Emishi*, which in the history of Japan applied to the Savages of the Nort-East, was transcribed by two characters, one of which, in the history of China, applied to the Savages of the East, i.e. Japan.

55. Xinjiang's main river. Born on the slopes of the Dapsang (also called Qiaogeli, K2 or Godwin Austen, 8611 m, Earth's second peak) as the Yarkand River, it dies in the Taklamakan Desert 2200 km away. Its basin equals that of the Danube (800 000 km^2). Main source of life in Xinjiang, it flows near Luntai under the Talimu Daqiao (Great Bridge on the Tarim, 605 m long, completed in 1995). On this river, see Cheng Qichou, *Talimu-he yanjiu* (Studies on the Tarim River), Nanjing: Hehai Daxue Chubanshe, 1993. Overexploiting the Tarim is one of the dangers of the present policy. This is typically a problem of sustainable development, and more fundamentally a problem of scale.

56. In my mind, the project should sooner or later become an International Scientific Co-Operation Program (PICS in the French initials) linking East Asia (China with Taiwan, – Japan, Korea) with Europe and Northern America, and hopefully other cultural areas.

57. In co-operation with the Institute of Ecology and Geography in Urumqi.

58. A theme which she has already been dealing with in her books *Los Angeles, le mythe américain inachevé* (Los Angeles, the Unfinished American Myth), Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1998; *La Ville américaine, espace et société* (The American City: Space and Society), Paris: Nathan, 1998; *Les Etats-Unis entre le local et le mondial* (The United States between the Local and the Global), Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2000. To a large extent, the value system of the American nation was built

against the city. In Europe, the schema of the city remains predominant, while coexisting anarchically with the Fordian predicate which came from the United States.

59. For instance, what about the tradition of 'renouncers' in its relation to present forms of settlement in India? And as for the desert, the Arab world should all the more be called in comparison as, in Xinjiang, Islam and the Chinese world penetrate each other.

60. The least one can say is indeed that, after the fecund relationship which was established in the first half of the last century between the Vidalian School and the *Annales* School, the links between geography and history have been distended. Now, from my point of view (that of Watsuji), *milieu embodies history;* accordingly, one cannot conceive of historicity without mediance, nor of mediance without historicity. I shall add: one cannot think of the ecumene without the contingency of history, nor of history without the concreteness of the ecumene. To wish for such a reflection is let us state it plainly to think that history and geography, because they still have to educate the young, could efficiently contribute to promoting a world, the future of which would be less barren than Cyborg's, in the pure mechanicity of its global market.