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# HOUSING, URBAN GOVERNANCE AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Perspectives, policy and practice

Edited by John Flint

# Testing urban forms: city, control and 'urban violence' in France

*Olivier Ratouis and Jérôme Boissonade*

## Introduction

The prolonged riots and disturbances in several French cities in October and November 2005 focused attention on urban tensions and disorder among young people, and particularly minority ethnic groups, living in deprived peripheral housing estates; while President Chirac's response calling for renewed 'respect' mirrored the language of Prime Minister Tony Blair in the UK (Henley, 2005). The term 'urban violence' is one of the dominant contemporary expressions used in France to describe and define society and the deviant behaviour of some of its members in particular locations. It offers a suitable conceptual framework for understanding the specific nature of national approaches to addressing issues of disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB). This chapter examines the historical development of conceptualisations of urban violence in France and links these to changing urban environments, the cultures and circumstances of young people and evolving city policies and urban governance structures.

## The concept of urban violence

The concept of urban violence, like the concept of ASB discussed in other contributions to this volume, combines numerous categories of sometimes very different phenomena<sup>1</sup>. This concept ascribes a category of actions to a category of locations, reactivating the Babylonian myth of the city as the place of evil and all vices. 'Violence, from time immemorial, was known as new, upward and urban' (Chesnais, 1981, p 431). To understand current French politics, they must be looked at in this context, because they represent a moment within longer historical dynamics which have in large part led to a redefining of the social questions previously concerned with 'exploited workers' to a

set of new urban questions based on 'zones of exclusion' (Donzelot and Mongin, 1999).

Viewing the transformations of French society at the end of the 1970s, Castells, looking back to the words of Marx, posed the question 'a new spectre haunts the world: will the urban crisis become an urban revolution?' (Castells et al, 1978, p. 7). Since the Second World War, France has experienced radical transformation. The rise in the power of state town planning and development activity including the construction of new housing schemes resulted in the replacement of existing society by an urban one that exceeded all the hopes of social reformers at the beginning of the 20th century (Magri and Topalov, 1987). These developments forged a brand new coalition of part of the working classes and the new middle classes, mobilised around urban questions including quality of transport, liveability, the environment and urban renovation.

These urban struggles in France signal the emergence of a new political force rising out of this middle class (the 'second left'). It relates specifically to a new way of organising society in areas of social space, centred on the problems of everyday life. The actions and proposals arising from these struggles directly articulate lifestyle and the use of urban space, through, for example, Municipal/Action Groups and Public Town Planning Studios.

Having brought its (largely municipal) elite to power, this multiform and decentralised movement came to an end with the shock of the first urban riots occurring at Les Minguettes in the suburbs of Lyon at the beginning of the 1980s, shortly after the Brixton troubles in England. These events fall within the framework of the end of the welfare state. Spontaneous and deprived of political development, the riots called into question the capability of the preceding movements, which have been gradually institutionalised, to deal with the evolution of society. More profoundly, these events were the forerunners of a persistent uncertainty about the ability of the city to ensure a certain social cohesion if society itself did not have the means to do so. This uncertainty was in evidence during the riots that occurred less than 10 years later at the Mas du Taureau, a housing scheme that had, in fact, just been the subject of major urban restoration works. It was on this basis, however, that an economic and political 'realism' developed, and a rise to prominence of what became known as the 'policy of the city'. In an article entitled 'The New Urban Question', Jacques Donzelot (1999) argued that this twofold trend did not succeed in stopping the passing from a civil society, the basis of the urban struggles

of the 1970s, to an 'uncivil society' whose urban riots formed the future outlook, predicting the events of autumn 2005.

### **'Young people' and urban areas: the structure of the problem**

Nowadays, in France daily portrayals of 'uncivil society' are no longer made from the image of the proletariat, but from 'groups of young people'. This evolution, and its study, has a long history, which we will try to trace back through the work of F. Dubet and D. Lepoutre in particular. Such processes may be dated back to at least the late 19th and early 20th centuries, where concerns were raised about 'apaches': groups of young people from working-class backgrounds who had populated the suburbs following the economic recession of 1880 and were pushed out of the working world by the new regulations on child protection. They responded to the new environments in which they lived through accessing 'employment' in theft, violence and prostitution (Pierret, 2003); similar contemporaneous processes were identified in US cities by the Chicago School, showing the importance of the urban environment in the development of gangs (Thrasher, 1963 [1927]).

With the massive increase in salaried employees after the Second World War, juvenile delinquency distanced itself from organised crime to establish itself more clearly in the processes of adolescent socialisation, with the figure of the 'hooligan'. While competing directly with middle-class 'dandies', the Teddy Boys clearly asserted their popular connections. The former were the sons of the middle class, of aesthetes. Hooligans were the children of the working class whose relationships were founded on the permanency of local ties, with some lapsing into minor delinquency. J. Monod, among others, tried to understand and account for the violence that occurred in gangs of young people. Like Frederick M. Thrasher, he noted that 'to exist, the hooligan needs a victim' (Monod, 1968, p. 349), whether a member of the group that they are trying 'to hustle' or a common enemy that they are fighting. Brawls with others outside of the gang represented a positive alternative to an internal fission and provided a pretext to evaluate the degree and the extent of the solidarity of group members. Monod was interested in particular in the 'ritualisation' of situations of violence. This ritualisation consists of protagonists adhering to the same value system in order to evade conflict. Tensions are ritualised by jokes that denigrate others to advantage those who show off exuberantly. This amounts to a transformation by words from a state of latent conflict to obvious ritual conflict.



The evolution of different groupings of young people accompanied massive urban development. The years of growth after the Second World War, very significantly known as 'thirty glorious years' (Fourastié, 1979), were characterised by an initial period of rebuilding of French cities and their centres destroyed by the war, and then a new phase emerging in the mid-1950s, and linked to industrialisation, involving massive urbanisation on the periphery of the cities. The Priority Urban Development Zones (ZUPs) were developed as an alternative to the traditional town (Vayssière, 1988). Lying on a level plateau and built on agricultural land available at low cost, located far away from city centres, they gave their name to the great visions of social utopia after the war, which Kaës (1963) described as the project of a classless society, one of the 'français moyen'. The housing was equipped with modern comforts; everything was 'new', including the vocabulary of the developers (Ratouis, 2005).

ZUPs gave rise within this context to important questions about lifestyles. In fact, the ZUPs gathered together populations of multiple origin (French and immigrant labour from the new industrial basins, repatriates from North Africa, as well as the middle classes, and so on). However, Chamboredon and Lemaire (1970) showed that this utopia of a classless society was actually characterised by spatial proximity but also by social distance. Various forms of localised segregation were in operation, and the middle classes did nothing but pass through the ZUPs on their way to relocating elsewhere in the small suburbs (Béhar, 1997). With the progressive evolution of these spaces, the processes of socio-spatial segregation and stigmatisation were thus at work (see Chapters Two and Five, this volume, for analogous developments in the UK). The ZUP appeared to be a type of 'Fordist residential space' (Ascher, 1995), to whose future these populations are linked. Within these areas of housing appeared 'gangs of teenagers'.

Lascoumes and Robert (1974 [1966], p 429) showed that the gang is 'not the inescapable grouping of abnormal children, but the shutting out of a social group by the effect of reciprocal segregation'. In general, trigger acts such as an attack or fight mark the birth of the gang. Such a 'feat', continuously embellished by the gang members, is universally disparaged by the adults in the surrounding environment. From this critical incident, the disparate gathering structures itself and finds coherence in its defensive attitude. In a work entitled *La Galère*, Dubet (1987), writing from a class-based perspective, described undefined young people in France plunged into a situation of personal violation. *La Galère* developed with de-industrialisation, its corollary being concentrations of mass unemployment, especially in districts of social

housing, and their segregation from more affluent populations resulting from the growth of suburban housing.

Twenty years after the construction of these housing estates, the phenomenon of gangs of young people decreased and changed in nature (Dubet and Lapeyronnie, 1992). From then on the absence of any regulation of violence linked to the 'galley' (*la galère*) would build the image of the gang. The gang, 'a small island of warmth and solidarity, of emotional safety' (Dubet, 1987, p 69), which would make it possible for members to rebel against the damaged world of a society without future, was replaced by a 'group of pals', a core of three or four individuals with tenuous links. The galley makes it impossible to form a hierarchy of homogeneous groups like those described by F.M. Thrasher. They all share three characteristics: disorganisation, exclusion and rage. The first, with its two sides of 'rotten world' and personal problems, the second, with alienation through a lack of power ('destiny') and frustrated conformism (they would like to live 'like everybody', see Chapter Four, this volume) and the third, based on nihilism and the strength that results from the absence of class relationships. Jubilant but not heroic, the galley does not rely on any already established group structuring. It is 'violence without object' (Dubet, 1987, p 103), banal and explosive, malicious and free, provocative and nihilist. The galley is precisely this non-regulation of violence, which comes from disorganisation, rage and frustration with which these young people are confronted. The young are 'enraged', incapable of registering a marginal action within the positive significance of social action, not because they are dominated, 'but because this domination prohibits conflict, because this action is moulded in institutional images and techniques which prohibit their perception as forms of domination' (Dubet, 1987, p 431).

Nowadays, while flexibility of work destabilises social contexts among the working classes, urban violence is redefined from the psychological categorisation of 'the evil of the housing schemes' and the pathology supposed to affect its inhabitants towards sociological and ethnological studies aiming to understand the phenomena of violence (Collovald, 2001). Lepoutre (1997) used his ethnographic investigation of adolescent society in the suburbs to denounce the disorganisation-exclusion-rage trilogy because it defined this population of young people by its problems and its failings. He argues (1997, p 20) that there 'are no human groups, so disorganized as they are, without an ideology, a vision of the world, a unified system of personal attitudes, in short, a culture'. He confines the study of this method of sociability to the age bracket between 12 and 16 years. After these ages, young

people then either integrate within the dominant standards conveyed by the middle class or alternatively adhere to a delinquent subculture, a degradation of the culture of the streets.

For Lepoutre (1997), city space is stigmatised not only for objective physical reasons (towers, roads and concrete) but also by the violence that is symbolic of certain practices (the dirtying of common spaces, throwing dustbins through the windows and the stoning of buses) that relate to offences directed against oneself. He shows that groups of young people are particularly affected, insofar as it is they who are the privileged carriers of this stigma, although denying it by affecting detachment; or more rarely by accepting it, and even asserting this negative image. Such findings have clear resonance with the discourse around young people and environmental degradation that dominates ASB discourses in the UK.

The space of the city is often the place and the context for conflict. Lepoutre (1997) again looks at the lesson of the Chicago School and shows in particular that the feeling of belonging develops mainly on a basis of the 'deathly practice' of conflict and violence. An aggressive ethos is culturally determined, in particular by the values transmitted during early childhood. The popular ideals of virility, strength, hardness (which are its negative side), honour or physical violence are inculcated by the family in which the father plays a central repressive role and in the street where training is given by example. To fight is to defend one's person against aggression from outside. Strength here is both a legitimate means of power and a privileged way of managing and resolving conflicts. Superiority depends on the network that can be mobilised by each individual in a solidarity of agony that requires reciprocity and balance. Such a concept of violence arises from three dominations suffered by young people: their youth, being low on the social scale and their position as outsiders. It is opposed to the social standard which school, in particular, transmits, where violence must give way to justice. In the same way, young people are pulled between two systems of standards: the dominant social culture and a 'culture of the streets', which would favour group conscience over other concerns. Based on the domination of the strongest, according to honour codes, personalities and reputations are assured.

This concept of a culture of the streets, with its system of codes, rituals and languages (Lepoutre, 1997), previously called a subculture, misses, however, what Lascoumes and Robert (1974 [1966]) had already noted in the previous period: that the violence of 'young suburban people' represents less an aggression against the dominant social norms than an unfiltered, roundabout search for conformity. It is this adhesion

to common values that causes firstly frustration, then violence in proportion to the economic and social exclusion that they suffer. In recent years, the increasing significance of concepts of collective subcultures re-legitimised an urban policy focus on urban space as the essential means to confront the 'pathologies' specific to the 'youth from the localities', in particular through the processes of redesigning residential housing, and more recently those of demolition and redevelopment. As cities have reorganised their public and private spaces, public spaces are subject to various forms of controlling the movements of users, while private spaces are protected and are subject to access controls. However, as the rules for areas of public movement become increasingly ambiguous in, for example, commercial galleries or on public transport, certain portions of the population, and young people in particular, are driven to confine themselves to the only public spaces available (see also Chapters Five and Twelve, this volume).

### **From social violence to urban violence**

It is the relationship that society maintains with urban space, and in particular public space, which in the long term affects our attitude with respect to the violence of youth. Whereas the rural migration of the end of the 19th century in France produced disorganisation marked by the violence of the 'apaches', the rural migration impelled by the massive requirement for immigrant manpower from the early 1960s witnessed the emergence, less than 20 years later, of the 'galley' of the 'young people of the suburbs' (Dubet, 1987). The earlier shift of identities from rural migrants to urban dwellers was accompanied by a discourse of social disorganisation (that is, lumpen proletariat, orphans) and of social violence. More recent migrations transform rural dwellers from the Maghreb and the south of Europe into urban dwellers who must above all fit into a process of industrial production. The return of these populations to their countries of origin appears impossible for many. Transient facilities (transit cities, shanty towns) are set up, a situation which would justify the 'urban violence' shown by the second generation, while continuing its work of acculturation at the same time, as highlighted in the events of autumn 2005.

In the contemporary context of de-industrialisation and the restructuring of the labour market, the 'disaffiliation'<sup>2</sup> of these populations favours an abstract economy, a carrier of all types of traffic and violence (Kokoreff, 2000). The contributors to a recent collection (Muchielli, 2001) have shown how these situations of violence are gradually made known in terms of insecurity. This shift from the term

of 'violence' to that of 'insecurity' has further evolved into 'feeling of insecurity', with a final semantic shift replacing 'of insecurity' with 'of uncivility' (see Roché, 2002a). This shift seems to result from a conflict around definitions of the issues that public policies have a need to resolve. The earlier approach that focused on the violence of youth related to educational and psychological action and was aimed at understanding and addressing social circumstances. This has been replaced by an approach that addresses disorder in terms of incivilities and relies on authority and morals; it aims at the rules of society being respected through the prevention of situations developing. The shift from the dread of the violence of youth, from social violence to urban violence, in terms of insecurity and then incivility, has had several consequences in the way in which we approach these phenomena.

The first shift from the terms of violence to that of insecurity has been described in terms of personal isolation (Dubet and Lapeyronnie, 1992). However, researchers are not all in agreement on the character of personal isolation<sup>3</sup>. Baudry (1988, p 11) prefers to speak of 'ruined rituals' and Lepoutre (1997, p 20) of 'significant violence, codified, controlled and given shape; in short, a cultivated violence'. The concept of a 'feeling of insecurity' accentuates the unpredictable nature of this chaotic violence. It shows especially that the phenomena described under these terms are constructions increasingly independent of the actual acts of violence (see also Chapter Three, this volume). More attention is given to security concerns and less to what is supposed to cause them. However, Pottier and Robert (2004, p 16) have shown that the feeling of insecurity is not a simple transfer of the risks involved<sup>4</sup>. In addition, by setting distinctions between uncivil youths and the 'average' inhabitant, this discourse does not account for the fact that the majority of the victims of these acts of violence are also those most likely to commit them.

The necessary quantification of this 'insecurity' has led in France to a reliance on research from the police and judicial sources, carried out in particular by the Institute of Higher Studies for Interior Safety (Ministry for the Interior), and its review, *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure*. One issue stands out: 'Town planning and safety: Towards an urban project?'. New definitions of space, new forms of control' (IHESI, 2001). This focus on controlling public space fails to recognise that often the places where conduct labelled urban violence occurs are not public places of obvious movement (Kokoreff, 2000), and 'calm' districts are ignored, even if the cause of this apparent quietude is in fact the presence of very significant movement.

Space becomes both the framework and the cause that generates

manifestations of deviant behaviour. One finds the radical expression of this idea in, for example, *Les Cahiers de la Sécurité Intérieure*, the Ministry for the Interior's magazine: 'In any location, there exist the germs of disorder, of insecurity, of violence: these germs, in certain individuals or groups who, belonging to networks of delinquency are likely to contaminate their environment in different ways, and in the place itself which, by its characteristics, lends itself to more or less noxious behaviour' (Akriich et al, 2001, p 83). In the face of a perception of the city as a dangerous medium, the district or neighbourhood may appear as a 'universe' that is simultaneously 'village', 'security' and 'territory' (Bachmann and Le Guenneq, 1997).

However, violence and insecurity are at the same time the product of a socio-spatial medium and an institutional product – a socio-spatial product because violence is a component of the culture of the young people of the suburbs, characterised by its visibility (if one compares it with the hazing/ragging within the elite, for example). It is also a violence of representation and an institutional product, the fruit of the daily work of the 'contractors of morals' (Becker, 1985 [1963]). Violence and insecurity which emanate from a simple dispute between young people in a city and police officers show that violence and insecurity are the product of specific interactions which one finds in the contact between police officers and young people, but also at school and, more generally, in all 'mixed contacts'<sup>5</sup>.

In the interest of safety, the French state responded by eliminating the apparent disorders in public spaces (incivilities), with the aim of reducing the feeling of insecurity and the probability of violence. However, at the same time, Lagrange (2003) shows that the representatives of the state, in particular via the public services, gave up a regular presence in these districts. The police force moved from preventive monitoring and dissuasion by presence to reactive monitoring, detection and punishment of committed acts of disorder. Moreover, the personnel entrusted with reducing 'urban violence' have multiplied, each one with a legitimacy and a specific status, including, for example: municipal police forces, gendarmerie, private watchmen, social workers, the national police force and youth employment agencies (see Chapter Eleven, this volume).

### City policy: towards public space or a space of control

'The 1970s witnessed the experimental dimension of 'urban struggles' in the make up of the city: an excessively warlike expression by which



it was agreed to indicate ... the action of associations specialising in the denunciation of the excesses of land speculation, the shortages of facilities in the recently urbanised zones and, generally, the exercise of patronage of technology in the practice of power by the local councillors' (Donzelot and Estèbe, 1994, pp 37–8). The objective was a social and political recovery of local areas (Wolf and Osselin, 1979). However, according to the Marxist rhetoric then fashionable, the importance given to the urban question 'originates in the initiative of the dominant classes, rather than the new struggles of the dominated classes' (Castells et al, 1978, p 8).

The 'city policy' (*politique de la ville*) that really began in France with the arrival of the Left in power in 1981 was aimed at a transformation of the way in which the state acts. The administrative culture, traditionally divided into autonomous technical sectors, was opened up to project-based groups capable of gathering together a variety of actors and sources of finance (Donzelot and Estèbe, 1994). One can thus understand the policy of the city as an alternative to the theme of urban struggle and as a way to urban reform.

The policies of urban zoning during the 'thirty glorious years' fragmented the planning of urban space. But the city policy fell under an urban philosophy that continued to be that of zoning: it aimed to rectify the zoned areas (ZUPs) and it maintained their perimeters (these were continually reduced progressively throughout these years by new ministerial directives). Thus, the 'dormitory towns' were transformed little by little into 'districts of exclusion' (Touraine, 1991) or of 'relegation' (Delarue, 1991), requiring a policy 'of vigorous integration'. Within the framework of the policy of the city, the old ZUPs were renamed with the euphemised term 'districts'. Thus, in the 1980s, the first 22 DSQ districts (social development neighbourhood areas) included the most distressed ZUPs, a measure known as 'anti-ghetto'. The ZUPs were finally ended in October 1991, with the 'Law of Orientation on the City' (LOV). This policy legitimised the renovated developments that emerged all over France during the 1980s (Anselme, 2000). The innovative social experiments that this policy initiated, based on the participation (and confrontation) of the various urban participants, were used as a reference point for a whole generation of social workers and social science researchers. It showed the limits of city policies that tried to respond to the problems of the 'zones of lawlessness' by a form of 'positive discrimination' which was primarily territorial (Béhar, 1999), as well as of an urban policy combining demolitions and re-housing aimed at 'separating' localities and allocating them to clearly identified managers.

The city policy also developed a new political initiative, that of ensuring safety in these areas. The most significant development appeared in 1997 when, at the initiative of the Ministry for the Interior, Local Safety Contracts (CLSs) were created, with the aim of giving a clear framework to partnerships linked around safety (Bauer and Raufer, 1998, p 85). A CLS can focus on one district or several, one or more towns or even an urban grid system. It thus aims to remove territorial limits (spatial, functional or jurisdictional). Local areas and the division of governance roles are in fact the creators of cracks into which 'disorders slipped' and 'delinquency made its nest' (Roché, 2002b, p 20). It is interesting to apply this argument to the neighbourhood governance processes in the UK discussed by John Flint in Chapter One (this volume).

Far from being initiatives without a definite origin, the CLS can be understood as the result of a historical reflection (Landauer, 1999) with its roots in the town planning ideas of Jane Jacobs (1961), the concept of 'defensible space' developed by Oscar Newman (1973) and the charges brought by Alice Coleman (1985) against 'Utopia', the Le Corbusier and functionalist town planning considered to be directly responsible for the behaviour of individuals, returning to the theme of the 'Sarcelle' or the 'evil of housing schemes'.

In France, the 'Law of Orientation and Programming Relating to Safety' (LOPS) of January 1995 included the idea of an evaluation of areas arranged according to their capacity to be supervised. Article 11 expressed limitations to the idea that when faced with uncivil behaviour, security is no longer only a question of state law and order and for the police force but is the business of everyone. The installation of councils for the prevention of delinquency on various levels, and especially the Community Councils for the Prevention of Delinquency (CCPDs), which became CLSs and which were 'territorialized authorities of dialogue', framed the involvement of the mayors in local safety required by them (Montain-Domenach and Froment, 1999).

This extension-rationalisation of urban security policies appeared at the same time as the concept of residentialisation emerged, reversing urban concepts of fluidity and movement. Rather, residentialisation consisted of systematically making a clear distinction between public and private areas<sup>7</sup>. It is applied in social housing schemes in the shape of a whole panoply of marks of separation including hedges, barriers and entry doors with codes (Dunoyer de Segonzac, 2004), and is posed as representing the only alternative to the degradation of districts of social housing and to the feeling of dereliction among their inhabitants (see Chapter Twelve, this volume). The residentialisation



operations already carried out show the homogeneity of the urban and architectural answers which were brought in to rectify situations which at the beginning could be regarded as quite different, ranging from the old social housing integrated into an existing urban fabric, to flagstoned residences and the housing schemes of the 1960s (Tabet, 1999). If the responses are similar despite these different contexts, it is because the aims pursued by these operations were often limited to the question of insecurity. The same conclusions can be raised concerning CLS (Akrich et al, 2001), and the subsequent demise of public space through reduction, closure and privatisation.

According to Milburn, the evolution of public policies in France after 1981 attempted to defuse 'the effects of social control aiming at standardizing society within disciplinary dynamics' (Milburn, 2004, p 139). These policies were based on the principle of a democratic exercise of power where citizens (users, professionals, local councillors and experts) take part in public policies through partnership authorities, like the DSQ. However, recently, in local policies, including those relating to security, it is no longer a question of maintaining an established social order but of preserving the principles of a fragmented and complex society, to be achieved by introducing support for victims and systems of punishment quantitatively proportional to the damages suffered.

By regarding uncivility as being 'provocative behaviour without embarrassment, a source of disturbance and aggravation in the everyday life of cities' (Balduyck and Lazerges, 1998, p 78), public policies directly refer to the idea of urbanity. However, does managed residency undermine the anonymous meetings and associations of crowds that make the metropolises urban (Simmel, 1979 [1903])? While the term 'ghetto' tirelessly returns to the mouths of the elected officials and media experts, Wacquant (1992) shows that one cannot compare the black districts of the South Side of Chicago to the 'difficult' districts of the Parisian suburbs, due to different ethnic concentrations. Nevertheless, a number of 'poor districts' are afflicted with racial stigma (Kokoreff, 2003). This reputation often goes hand in hand with a geographical distance from the city centre, poor communal transport, a lack of public services, and a lack of choice as regards trade, services and other meeting places which the traditional city provides, as highlighted in the 2005 disturbances.

Supposedly inspired by the model of the traditional city in order to initiate processes of 'gentrification', doesn't the step of managed residency of the housing schemes participate in a wider shift concerning urban space as a whole, with the closed-circuit television monitoring

of the great cities as well as that of the subway or the theme parks? Linked to the European Community, the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) potentially outlaws any street corner, and prohibits 'the existence of blind zones making it possible for attackers to hide and also making it likely to reinforce a feeling of insecurity' (Garnier and Moreau de Saint-Martin, 2001, p 13)<sup>8</sup>. It recommends cul-de-sacs self-monitored by the residents. However, the police force and fire services reject the cul-de-sacs in general for reasons of safety (Vayssière, 2001).

In order to understand the range of these dynamics, it becomes interesting to look again at the categories worked out by Foucault (1975) and in particular the idea of the passage from a disciplined society, based on the generalised supervision through public works (for example, schools or asylums) to a society of control. The philosopher Gilles Deleuze explains that, according to Foucault, the disciplined society in which individuals do not stop moving from one closed environment to another (schools, barracks or hospitals), is today in full crisis. Rather, what is at play is a movement to societies of control 'that function not by imprisonment, but by continuous assessment and instantaneous communication' (Deleuze, 1990, p 236), based on new models which advocate opening 'ceaseless control in an open environment' (Deleuze, 1990, p 236). The old model was the panoptical prison; the new one is electronic tagging. The chain has dematerialised. Each individual today is called on to demonstrate constraint. One last distinction made by Foucault between discipline and security is crucial here insofar as it qualifies the relationship to space. While discipline organises complete constructions in empty spaces, security rests on material information, such as the sites and shapes already there. While 'discipline structures a space, security will try to deal with an environment' (Foucault, 2004, p 22). Indeed, whereas discipline seeks to rectify dangerous individuals, in the society of control each one of these individuals is likely to undermine its fragile balance.

The term 'co-veillance', or shared monitoring, whose influence in France is similar to that of 'situational prevention' or 'defensible space' (Newman, 1972) on the other side of the Channel, consists of instantaneously broadcasting the information captured by the cameras to all of the resident population. It relates here, no longer to a location, but to a security environment. Moreover, this practice is coordinated by a focusing of interest on certain locations, the most obvious being perhaps the apartment hall and stairwell that were the subject of surveys of gathering places (Law Sarkozy, 2003)<sup>9</sup>.

## Conclusion

Throughout the 20th century, the phenomena of social segregation and violence were perceived sometimes as overwhelming and at other periods as unimportant. In addition to the fact that 'the spectacle of dereliction' of the districts of social housing have continued despite more than 20 years of city policy, Beaud and Pialoux (2003, p 342) insist on one essential factor: 'The closing of the future, the shrinking of possible societies that young people from the districts with poor school and social resources became more and more aware of earlier and earlier'.

In debates about insecurity, it is the state that is summoned to set a dividing line between disorder and the respect of order. To be able to live together assumes not perceiving your neighbour as an 'enemy within' and being able to differentiate yourself from them in order to exist as an individual. However, the coexistence of inhabitants in district housing areas (HLMs) arises from administrative decisions over which they have no control, but which gives them the right to be there. Accordingly, the rental relationship functions as a social relationship where each person must differ from their neighbour. It is this right to be there which also explains, we believe, both the constant discussion on the feeling of insecurity and relatively peaceful coexistence that finally characterises the majority of HLM districts (Anselme, 2000).

City policy, like any other public policy, requires a representation of reality likely to be useful as a reference point. The concept of 'mix' ('*mixité*') nowadays plays this role of generating a direction and mobilising the public actors. It is generally regarded that a 'state of equilibrium' should be reached between social classes and ethnic categories. With the term 'mix', the actors place themselves in a symbolic register over a long time period. The various laws issued include many direct references to 'mixed urban functions', 'social mix of districts' and 'diversity of the offer available'<sup>10</sup>. They no longer aim at an urban model, but at a mobilisation of the urban actors through a collective 'putting in place' based on these mix-development rules (Local Housing Programmes, great City Projects, National Agency for Urban Renewal). It is thus a new model of public intervention that emerges through these procedures.

However, mix, far from being a problem of residential balance to be respected between categories of population, proves to be a 'process of permanent friction between the social groups, that must be driven and guaranteed' (Béhar, 1997, p 284) through the social activities and public places where they occur. If one regards social mix as a process

of friction between social groups, it is no longer a question of urbanising, but of producing 'urban' situations (Boissonade, 2001). Suddenly, public intervention is centred around strategic objects of producing social integration in urban territory, including public spaces and collective transport. This emphasis on links rather than places leads us from the language of a city model and urban forms to that of a focus on ensuring the safe movement of city dwellers through urban spaces.

## Acronyms

CCPD	Conseil communal de Prévention de la Délinquance
CEN	Conseil européen de normalisation
CLS	Contrat local de sécurité
DSQ	Développement social de quartiers
HLM	Habitation à loyer modéré
LOV	Loi d'orientation sur la ville
LOPS	Loi d'orientation et de programmation sur la sécurité
ZUP	Zone à urbaniser en priorité

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Ministry for the Interior gives a definition of urban violence that includes degrees of violence, from 'day-to-day' vandalism to full-blown guerrilla riots (Bui-Trong, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Beyond the dwindling of family links, the disaffiliated individual no longer fits into any network. He is thus no longer attached to any of the chains whose entanglement constitutes social fabric; he is 'useless in the world' (Castel, 1995, pp 90-6).

<sup>3</sup> Personal isolation, according to Emile Durkheim (1967 [1893], pp 343-65), is the absence or the insufficiency of regulation making it possible to ensure the cooperation between various specialised social functions, such as those ensured by capitalists and workers. Regulations also make it possible to calm individual aspirations whose disproportion could lead to suicide if they are controlled too little or not regulated in the case of personal isolation.

<sup>4</sup> The progression from the term 'violence' to that of 'insecurity', then 'incivility' can mean that 'the more an unpleasant phenomenon decreases, the more of what remains is perceived or experienced as unbearable' (Lloqueville, in Pottier and Robert, 2004, p 213).

<sup>5</sup> A mixed contact, in Goffman's sense, is a contact with a stigmatised person. The singularity of this situation comes as a result of the fact that stigmatisation disturbs any readable structure which can or may give rules to be followed in this precise situation and guide the interactions (Goffman, 1973).

<sup>6</sup> Sarcelles, located in Paris and its suburbs, is one of the very large French ZUPs.

<sup>7</sup> A handbook edited by the federation of the district housing area (HLM) companies and intended for social financial backers, specifies the reasons for these actions: 'The buildings, originally placed in areas with unspecified purposes, frequently became the cause of conflicts of use and technical dysfunctions, generating a feeling of insecurity, can become [thanks to residentialisation] an object where ownership is created on the part of its inhabitants; the inhabitants know where their "at home" starts and who manages what.... "Who makes what where" is thus the first question that managers are asked which clarifies the rules of each location' (Launay and Royer-Vallat, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> CEN has a technical committee: Prevention of Ill Will by Town Planning and the Design of Buildings.

<sup>9</sup> 'Acts of violence or the threat of committing violence against a person, or an obstacle deliberately made to the access and freedom of movement of people or the correct operation of safety and safety devices, when they are carried out jointly with several others or accomplices, in the entrances, stairwells or other common parts of housing apartment buildings, are punished with two months of imprisonment and a fine of 3,750 Euros' (Article 61, Law Sarkozy, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> 'Law of Social Cohesion', 'Law of Orientation on the City', 'Law of Solidarity and Urban Renewal'.

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