How Modernity Forgets

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If, then, the spatial frameworks of a culture, the way in which we set about the task of producing spaces, occupies a pivotal role in the localisation of cultural memory, if it establishes a *topography of remembering*, then this might lead us on to ask the further question and to return us to the question posed at an earlier stage: what is the effect of the produced spaces of *contemporary culture* on the transmission of cultural memory?

Its effect, I want to suggest, is to generate a particular kind of *cultural amnesia*; and, for the sake of heuristic convenience, I should like to distinguish three features of contemporary human settlement, which are inextricably intertwined, the investigation of which will help us to understand how this condition of cultural forgetting is generated. The first is the scale of human settlement. The second is the production of speed. The third is the repeated intentional destruction of the built environment. These phenomena are to be explained, in their turn, by the particular moment we have now reached in the capitalist process of production.

I

The 'art of memory' was a European rhetorical tradition which was sustained for some fifteen hundred years, from, let us say, Cicero to Leibniz. Ideas are not contextless; and in understanding this tradition of thinking about place memory, this 'method of loci' as its practitioners styled it, we need to keep in mind the characteristic life-spaces, what might be called the scale of emplacement, within which these conventions of rhetoric flourished. As the practice of an intellectual elite, this would have been a city world; but if we were able to walk through these cities we would immediately be struck

by the concentration of people in a geographic space that by modern standards would appear minuscule. These were urban entities which came into existence behind well-equipped fortress walls and where the city ground plans took their shape and meaning from the distinctive opposition between city and land, between centre and periphery. What distinguished towns in the Middle Ages from the villages, estates and manorial settlements that covered much of the European plain was that these towns and cities closed themselves off from the rural environment in order to enlarge the scope and intensity of their communication with the wider world. These urban entities were a crossroads within a wall.[1]

The first thing we need to notice, then, is the small scale of early modern European settlements. In 1400 the most common type of European town was the local marketing centre. These tiny places, many little different from farming villages, which had fewer than 2,000 residents, constituted the overwhelming majority of all urban settlements and housed over half the urban population of Europe.[2] In 1400 only four European cities – Paris, Milan, Bruges and Venice – had populations of more than 100,000 inhabitants, while the tenth largest city in Europe, Ghent, had a population of 70,000 inhabitants.[3] In 1500 London had a population of 50,000 and even two centuries later the next largest English city after London numbered only 20,000. In general, territorial groups organised medieval communes. Venice was informally organised into neighbourhoods, each with its own church, square, quay and well, defining a territory within which much of the daily life of the residents took place; and Genoa's political, military and judicial structures were territorially ordered around eight *compagne*. The citizens of medieval communes had a daily familiarity with a large part of their environment; in all but the few largest cities, the whole of the urban space was easily accessible on foot. Shown a square mile of Venice on a map after looking at a square mile on the map of any of ten or fifteen present-day major North American and European cities, an observer is likely to ask if the map of Venice is truly drawn at the same scale as the others.

The spatial memorability of early modern European settlements, grounded in their small scale, was definitively reinforced by two further features of pre-eminent importance: their perimeter, and their point of central focus. One of the most distinctive elements of town design was its perimeter.[4] To this general rule there were, indeed, exceptions; in a few parts of Europe, particularly in many English market towns and in some settlements in the Spanish Netherlands, there remained a substantial number of unwalled towns. But most cities provided themselves with a clearly demarcated perimeter, an easily recognisable outline formed by fortifications, gates and towers, and many had heavy stone walls, built particularly during the period between 1100 and 1500. Not that such walls formed permanent barriers; as towns grew, they incorporated the surrounding land and population by building new fortifications; Paris constructed five such lines of walls between 1180 and 1845. Then, at the centre of these towns, Gothic cathedrals were of such magnitude as to dominate the entire urban landscape; by providing an orientation towards one building, they endowed the city as a whole with a monolithic character. In every city where a cathedral was erected from the late twelfth century onwards, it was the largest building ever built there and it would remain so until the twentieth century. This was so of the cathedrals of Florence and Milan in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy; it was so with the cathedrals of the imperial cities of Central Europe such as Ulm and Nordlingen; and in many French towns – Lyon, Chartres, Amiens, Bourges – the cathedral provided the focal point around which the layout of streets and markets was organised. All these cathedrals were disproportionate in size to the city they dominated; their existence effectively eliminated the very possibility of any competing undertaking. Enclosed within their clearly demarcated perimeter, this orientation of the city towards one single building created an effect of spatial cohesion, and hence of memorability, which remained in force whether the cathedral was viewed from a distance or whether it was viewed from close up, and the sense of cohesion persisted from every vantage point.[5]

The period from 1500 to 1750, it is true, was marked by concentrated urban growth, with large-scale new baroque capitals and mercantile centres concentrating royal authority and the organisation of national and overseas commerce. By the late sixteenth century, London, Amsterdam, Paris, Madrid, Lisbon and half a dozen other cities all had a population of at least 100,000 and in some instances as much as 250,000. Whereas in the mid sixteenth century Paris and London, the largest cities north of the Alps, had 130,000 and 60,000 inhabitants respectively, they were approaching the half million mark by 1650. The growth of Madrid is particularly striking testimony to the impact of absolutist monarchies in creating a new urbanisation based on government employment: a town with only a few thousand inhabitants in 1561, it grew to 65,000 by 1600 and to 170,000 by 1630.[6] By the mid eighteenth century a new urban hierarchy had come into being in Europe. Where there were only four cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants in 1500, twenty-four had reached this total by the beginning of the nineteenth century. From a medieval peak of some 200,000 inhabitants, the summits of the urban hierarchy grew to 500,000 by 1700 and to more than a million by 1800. In the period from 1300 to 1800 overall, Europe experienced something never before seen outside the Mediterranean basin: the growth of very large urban entities.[7]

Yet, as Girouard has observed, it was still possible two hundred years ago to see the whole of any city in the world.[8] You could see London from Highgate, Paris from Montmartre, Rome from Monte Mario. An astonishing amount of Venice could be found in one square mile; most of the Grand Canal, and everything from near the railway station in the north-west to the Arsenal in the east, is in that area. One square mile of Rome could include the Piazza Venezia, the Via del Corso, the Piazza Navona, the Pantheon and the Trevi Fountain. Almost all of central Amsterdam, including its major canal system, fits into such an area. Two hundred years ago it still made sense to speak metaphorically of a bird's eye view of a city. Those who wanted to portray the city would climb to the top of a cathedral,

belfry, or central tower in order to grasp visually from a single point of view the entire urban space they intended to describe.[9] Eighteenth-century vistas of Venice indicate that the domes of Salute, Redentore, St Mark's, and San Giorgio Maggiore all need to be viewed as a unit.[10] Eighteenth-century engravings of Vienna, such as the monumental engraving by Joseph Daniel Hopfer commissioned by Empress Maria Theresa in 1769, represent the city as a closed entity.[11] There still exists a bird's eye view of Amsterdam in 1544, after an engraving by Cornelis Anthoniszoon.[12] Most cities, indeed, had an easily recognisable outline, a perimeter of fortifications, gates and towers. Laid out before your eyes, if you climbed to a high spot in any city, was a kind of urban forest of roofs, towers, domes and spires, but you could still see that the forest had edges and a circumference. The circuit of walls girdling the medieval city might have gone, and the size of the city may have grown, but the human eye could still survey the city as a whole and be convinced that it had a perceptible gestalt. The inhabitants lived with and could envisage the view of a *bounded* city.

The mark of modernity is the dismantling of the city frontier, the effacement of the self-evident and uncontested city form for which the gestalt of the fortified city had provided the model. No longer seen as a fixed and delimited form, the city becomes a labile and mobile whole that, in principle, develops endlessly. The nineteenth-century city becomes formless.[13] Mining centres, mills, metallurgical complexes spring up in a growth that is rapid, unplanned and largely unregulated. Aside from calculations regarding the logistics of transporting bulky products, these new life-spaces have little form; and as they spread they merge into an entirely new type of urban concentration. How is this formlessness to be named? Some areas are called the Black Country or the Five Towns. Some are named after a natural feature which their growth so quickly smothers, like the Ruhr Valley. Some are named after the work done there, like the Borinage, which means coal extraction. The generic term which best fits these dense yet weakly centralised regions is the one coined by Patrick Geddes to denote any very large urban area: the conurbation.

In the great cities of the late nineteenth century – London, Paris, Berlin, New York – even if you climbed a hill you could no longer see the whole of the city; the edges of the urban forest could not be surveyed any more. If you wanted to see the whole of a city you now had to go several thousand feet up in an aeroplane. It is difficult to overstate the magnitude of the mutation in urban history brought about by the emergence of the giant city. There was no city of a million inhabitants in the west from the end of the Roman Empire until the eighteenth century, when London attained that figure, and no city of half that size, with the exception of Paris and Naples. But in 1900 Europe contained nine cities of over a million inhabitants – London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St Petersburg, Manchester, Birmingham, Moscow and Glasgow – and a further twenty-two between a half a million and a million.[14] Because of the new constitution of the urban proletariat, uncertain from one day to the next about lodging and employment, the city paves the way for a great uprooting, the remarkable *massive rupture* between persons and places.

The massive change in the scale of cities was due above all to the physical separation between the place of residence and the place of work. The transformation from a tight integration of work and residence to a spatial organisation in which workplaces and residences were disposed in different clusters was the central feature in the large-scale industrialisation of nineteenth-century England.[15] It has been closely documented for Leicester,[16] for Birmingham,[17] for Coventry[18] and for Leeds;[19] even in London, where craft production survived as the dominant form throughout the nineteenth century, there was a sorting out into single-purpose, specialised neighbourhoods and a large-scale separation of work spaces and living spaces.[20] The emergence of this new type of human settlement occurred in distinctively different ways in different types of cities. Some, like Chicago and Pittsburgh, were started anew; some, like Lille and Essen, were built on the foundations of older villages or smaller cities; some, like the suburban extensions of Paris and London, grew on the outskirts of existing major cities. Yet even such different cases

as are to be found on the continents of Europe and America demonstrate the same fundamental principle at work. Even though the new European urbanisation was modified by the more historically layered character of continental cities, the impact of industrialisation was decisively registered by the taking down of city walls in mid-nineteenth-century Paris, Vienna, Brussels, Geneva, Madrid and Stockholm.[21] The most extreme instance of the change in scale was in the New World. Just as Americans saw the natural world around them as limitless, so they envisaged the spaces of human settlement as subject to no natural limitation but as capable of infinite expansion; the grid system, extending block after block, was in principle boundless.[22]

Yet – and it is an extremely important qualification – the lived space of the new industrial working classes was still structured on what was, by modern standards, a small scale.[23] Though dwelling place and working place were separated, they were not distant. The factory town of the mid nineteenth century remained a community where people walked to and from work, and this continued to be the case until the introduction of tramways and bicycles at the end of the century.[24] Mining settlements were more like villages than towns. The major cotton-mill towns of Britain in 1870, then at their industrial peak, contained between 30,000 and 80,000 inhabitants. Clydebank, with its major shipyards, chemical works and distilleries, had 22,000 inhabitants in 1901. In England, the organisation of industrial disputes by trade union branches often took place in pubs, where landlords acted as strike coordinators or union treasurers, and Friendly Societies, the main self-help community organisation for workers, also gathered in ale houses.[25] In France, under the Second Republic and Second Empire, workers were able to develop a militant class consciousness in relatively free social spaces, informal working-class gathering places such as cafés, taverns, cabarets, dance halls and theatres.[26] In Europe generally, the real strength of the big city labour movements resided in what were in effect urban villages, townships within cities: Floridsdorf in Vienna, Wedding in Berlin, Sans in

Barcelona, Sesto San Giovanni in Milan. Anyone who doubts that we are still talking about communities in the strong sense of the term, where the feeling for a particular place remained crucial and enduring, should recall the early history of football clubs. Of the sixteen leading teams in the First Division of the English Football League in the early 1890s, eleven came from towns ranging from 60,000 to 200,000, while the three which came from parts of giant cities (Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham) were named not after the city but after the neighbourhood or borough within it (Newton Heath, Everton and Aston), a practice repeated when the subsequently founded London football teams were named after neighbourhoods – Chelsea, Crystal Palace, Charlton, Leyton, Tottenham and West Ham.

To bring these facts into relief is to remind ourselves of how radically different these life-spaces were from the emerging spatial order that characterises the most materially advanced forms of contemporary civilisation. What is now developing is a new form of settlement space. Just as Engels in the 1840s located the most advanced spatial example of the new industrial capitalism in Manchester, so now Gottdiener sees today's equivalent in the dispersed spatial arrangements of the United States in the 1980s.[27] He summarises the difference in the contrast between the 'bounded city form' and what he calls the 'polynucleated metropolitan region'. By this he means to emphasise the fact that the currently emerging spatial order is best understood not as a larger version of the city, even the giant city, but as possessing certain new structural peculiarities of its own. These new features make the old model of urban development increasingly inaccurate in describing contemporary spatial phenomena. In the past, the study of urban life was focussed on a particular image of urban spatial structure, the bounded city form, where capital, production, people and power were concentrated in the city centre, and where correspondingly it seemed appropriate to have an image of spatial integration as forming a series of concentric zones. What we now increasingly have are metropolitan populations distributed in ever expanding regional areas that are not only massive in scope

but amorphous in form. Polynucleated growth is characterised above all by this process of deconcentration: the massive regional dispersal of people, commerce, industry and administration along with the contemporary restructuring of such regions into multicentred realms – sprawling for miles and miles and located everywhere in the country, especially in those areas once thought immune from urban development.[28]

These life-spaces form the emerging spatial order that characterises the most materially advanced forms of contemporary civilisation. Whereas in 1900 only one-tenth of the world's population lived in cities, a century later half the population lives in cities. While Europe in 1900 contained nine cities with over a million inhabitants, by 1990 there were thirty-five cities in the world with populations of over 5 million, twenty-two of them in the developing world; and by 2000 it was estimated that there would be fifty-seven cities over the 5 million mark, forty-four in the developing world.[29] By 1992 there were already thirteen megacities – Tokyo, São Paolo, New York, Ciudad de Mexico, Shanghai, Bombay, Los Angeles, Buenos Aires, Seoul, Beijing, Rio de Janeiro, Calcutta, Osaka – which, as nodes of the global economy, constituted very large agglomerations of over 10 million.[30]

What may become the most representative urban reconfiguration of the twenty-first century is the Southern China metropolis, an emerging megacity connecting Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Zhuhai and Macau, in a spatial structure extending over 50,000 square kilometres and embracing a population of between 40 and 50 million, depending upon where you define the boundaries. In the mid 1990s this space still had no name. Yet, although its component parts are still spatially discontinuously dispersed throughout a predominantly rural landscape, it is a spatial system bound together by a backbone of internal linkages, with a net of railways, freeways, hovercraft, boats and planes, with five new airports being built in Hong Kong, Macau, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Guangzhou, and with nearby container ports under construction in Hong Kong, Shenzhen,

Zhuhai, Guangzhou and Macau. Though it is nameless it is rapidly becoming an interdependent unit.[31]

The history of the city in the twentieth century has been a story of dispersal. As the story of the radiocentric city nears its end we become suspicious of centring devices and we refer so readily to the decentred subject because the subject's current characteristic mode of emplacement takes place in life-spaces which are themselves decentred. So when Lynch, in *The Image of the City* of 1960,[32] described the metropolis as a place of well-defined nodes, pathways, edges, landmarks and districts, he was being nostalgic; whereas Frank Lloyd Wright was being prescient in 1932 when he wrote that 'the future city will be everywhere and nowhere, and it will be a city so greatly different from the ancient city or any city of today that we will probably fail to recognize its coming as the city at all'.[33] In life-spaces so changed in their scale of emplacement that the city becomes less and less a physical entity that might yield a point of focus, one of the fundamental preconditions, which the art of memory as a method of loci took for granted as something which goes without saying, is blurred beyond recognition.

2

This preliminary view of the scale of human settlement leads us naturally to consider the second of the processes which I isolated earlier: *the production of speed*.[34]

The supersession of walking by mechanised modes of movement in the nineteenth century was signalled by the metaphor of circulation, with its triple allusion to the movement of traffic, the circulation of goods and the circulation of the blood; and many of the invented rituals of the century were rituals of speed, every triumph over the tyranny of distance, from the inauguration of rail links to the opening of the Suez Canal, providing the occasion for elaborate celebrations. By the end of the century the capitalist world's reconfiguration on the basis of modern traffic, though not complete, was already evident. Machines of mobility – trains, steamships, bicycles,

elevators, escalators, automobiles, aeroplanes – transformed the relationship between sight and bodily movement.[35] The look was being mobilised by mechanical rides.[36] The Eiffel Tower of 1889 featured an elevator ascending at over 2 metres per second; the Chicago Exhibition of 1893 displayed a Ferris Wheel and a mechanical ride through a movement machine; at the first public projection of films in 1895 the audience witnessed the arrival of a train at a station in the Lumière brothers' *L'arrivée du train en gare*; at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, 3.5 kilometres of moving track, a *trottoir roulant* or moving pavement with three speeds, transported spectators through the exhibition space as if they were goods on a conveyer belt; and in the Russian exhibit, visitors could board 21-metre-long railway carriages, fully equipped with dining rooms, smoking rooms and bedrooms, to take part in a 'virtual trip' on the Trans-Siberian Railway, a virtual tour which condensed the fourteen-day trip from Moscow to Peking into 45 minutes.

We witness here the emergence of a new mode of perception – a panoramic perception – which precipitates a new relationship between the perceiver and the object-world, where the perceiver, instead of belonging to the same space as the perceived objects, sees those objects through the mechanical apparatus which moves the perceiver through the world; here the motion produced by the machine is integral to the act of visual perception itself in the sense that the perceiver can only see things in mechanised motion. If the railway journey yielded the prototype of panoramic perception, its most typical modern instance is the motorway; envisioned as a spatial conductor for conveying traffic in a frictionless flow, the highway has become perhaps the most romanticised structure of the twentieth-century built environment. In his 1986 film *Reichsautobahn*, Bitomsky accomplishes something like an archaeology of past perception by re-presenting the autobahn at the moment of its first imagining; decomposing original cinema footage into its individual images, by close analysis of single film scenes, by slowing down film shots, and by scrutinising frame enlargements,

he conclusively demonstrates the representational work of early cinema in the intoxicating speed of the autobahns which became the most massively filmed construction project of the century.[37] Seen through the windshield of an automobile, the German landscape, as Dimendberg has well shown, transformed by the carefully positioned twists and turns of the new highways into a manufactured pastoral, reminded many observers at the time of a scene from an aeroplane;[38] just as the American variant of the technological sublime, exhibited at the 1939 World's Fair, featured film footage of cars travelling on the model highway of the Futurama, where the sweep of the camera over the landscape anticipated the view of a typical suburban setting as one might witness it today from the window of an aeroplane.[39]

Motorways now appear so natural that we have to make an effort to imagine a world without them; but when they were being built they were so unfamiliar that an effort was required to imagine oneself into them. But the German and the American intoxication with freeways reveals the motorway as not solely a solution to a traffic problem but a feature of the social imaginary, not just a piece of material practice but a labour of representation. The autobahn bridges and the lane dividers in the traffic scheme of Bel Geddes were far more than elaborate pieces of engineering; they were metaphors in which the flow of vehicles represented fantasies of national unity and unimpeded circulation. Indeed, by mid-century the degree of collective libido invested in highways had reached the point where the modern automobile and its motorways were spoken of quite explicitly as being as integral to our lives as were the forum and the acropolis to the lives of the ancients. Motorways, it has been said, are the pyramids of the twentieth century.[40]

The comparison made here is not simply a conceit or hyperbole, in the sense that it registers adequately a fundamental structural change of spatial values: that is to say, a shift in the relationship between the two main components of all cultural landscapes or topographies – settlements, and pathways connecting settlements. The

outstanding feature of the modern cultural landscape, increasingly, is the dominance of pathways over settlements.[41]

Traffic engineering tends to supersede town planning; and this mass production of speed has been gradually effacing the distinction between dwelling and travelling. We no longer live in societies dominated by relatively stationary zones but rather by ones characterised by their nodes of passage. Well over half a century ago Musil may have thought he caricatured when, in *The Man Without Qualities*, he depicted 'a kind of super-American city where everyone rushes about, or stands still, with a stop-watch in his hand,… Overhead trains, overground trains, underground trains, pneumatic express mails carrying consignments of human beings, chains of motor vehicles all racing along horizontally, express lifts vertically pumping crowds from one traffic level to another';[42] and later Gertrude Stein thought it was 'something strictly American to conceive of space that is filled always filled with moving';[43] but the steady uninterrupted flow of traffic which she thought of as a universal American requirement is now widely diffused.

The universal diffusion of traffic began to take firm hold over the human habitat following the Second World War; it was at that point that a series of industries, focussed on a number of regions in the world economy – the Midwest of the United States, the West Midlands in Great Britain, the Ruhr-Rhineland and the Tokyo-Yokohama region – concentrated on the manufacture of cars, ships, planes and transport equipment. In the immediate post-war period these were among the major propellants of economic growth. In its train have come a proliferation of transit points: airports, hotel chains, large retail outlets. Bofill and Castells are in agreement that the new architectural monuments of our epoch are likely to be built as 'communication exchanges' – train stations, airports, harbours, telecommunication infrastructures, computerised trading centres.[44]

This mass production of speed has been gradually effacing the distinction between dwelling and travelling. We need to think a little

more closely about what the effacement of the distinction between dwelling and travelling implies. Contemporary Paris, to take a single instance, is a topography of more or less *continuous displacement*.[45] In 1972 there were 7 million daily displacements inside Paris and over 12 million daily displacements in the Paris region. Some 850,000 people commuted daily from Paris to the suburbs; 200,000 went daily from Paris to jobs outside; 900,000 suburbanites travelled daily to employment in the suburbs; 700,000 inhabitants of Paris travelled daily to employment within the city. The Parisian or the suburbanite spent on average two hours a day in transport, the equivalent of one quarter of working time. During a single hour when the greatest concentration of movement took place, more than 700,000 people were found to be using public transport, with 300,000 in the Métro and 230,000 passing though the railway stations. The figures may be taken as emblematic. Every day there are over 100,000 people in the air.[46] At Dallas Fort Worth they serve 30 million passengers a year. The airport has become a new kind of crossroads, a kind of miniature city that abstracts from the historical and cultural specificity, the temporal layering, of all previous cities. We increasingly occupy a *space of flows* rather than a *space of places*.[47]

Topography is read through the car. We use a car not to see a city but to gain freedom of movement; but the view from the car's windows is often our primary experience of urban space, and much everyday knowledge of our life-spaces is learned through a windshield. So Rayner Banham can write that 'Like earlier generations of English intellectuals who taught themselves Italian in order to read Dante in the original, I learned to drive in order to read Los Angeles in the original.'[48] The driver of a motor vehicle has the perception of a kind of abstract subject equipped with the capacity to read the symbols of the highway code, concerned only with steering to the destination, looking about to see only what needs to be seen for that purpose; the route is seen solely from the angle of its functionality. Space thus appears in a reduced form: volume yields to surface, any overall view surrenders to visual signals spaced out along fixed trajectories already

mapped out in the plan. Speed, as it were, cancels out the ground and territorial reference points, and driving achieves what Virilio calls 'the aesthetics of disappearance'. This is why Baudrillard calls speed 'the triumph of instantaneity over time as depth', the 'triumph of forgetting over memory' and, with characteristic hyperbole, 'a spectacular form of amnesia'. The rule of speed, he says, is to leave no trace behind. In *The View From the Road*, Appleyard, Lynch and Myer describe the driving experience as 'a sequence played to the eyes of a captive, somewhat fearful, but particularly attentive audience, whose vision is filtered and directed forward'.[49] In this driving space, where the post-urban civilisation represented by Los Angeles is being born, a metropolis of seventy-six different cities where alleyways are ten-lane freeways and where, as Umberto Eco has so elegantly put it in his *Travels in Hyperreality*, man considers his left foot an atrophied appendix, because cars no longer have a clutch, eyes are something to focus, at steady driving speed, on visual-mechanical wonders, on signs, constructions that must impress the mind in the space of a few seconds.[50]

Cars restructure topography by destroying the street as a place for gathering. Since the level of social interaction between neighbours in a given street is inversely related to the amount of traffic passing through it, cars undermine the cohesive social structures of the city by eroding shared social space. They require space to have essentially the function of permitting motion so that this space becomes meaningless unless it can be subordinated to free movement. The overall effect is to divide the urban fabric into two types of space. The first type is urban space which fulfils a single function. To this category belong the business district, the industrial zone, the residential suburb, the housing estate, the shopping mall, the car park, the ring-road, the underpass and the sealed machine of the car itself. The second type is urban space which Michael Walzer has called 'open-minded'. To this category belong the bustling square, the market, the lively street, the pavement café and the park. In the first type of space we are in a hurry; in the second type of space we are more ready to acknowledge

the existence of other people, and might even go so far as to exchange friendly words with them. The reconfiguration of urban topography by the car means that the second type of space is steadily and inexorably eclipsed by the first.[51]

The great initiator of this new type of topography, it is true, predates the car: it was Haussmann who taught subsequent urban planners to subordinate all functions of urban settlement to the road as a carrier of vehicular traffic and to disregard the movement of pedestrians; his network of arterial connections constituted what he described as a 'general circulatory system', subdivided into tributary systems, each organised around a plaza, which in turn is no longer a place in itself but a traffic node, what Haussmann called a 'node of relation'. It was the subsequent diffusion of cars that made this topographical reconfiguring prototypical. The anticipation of increasingly high levels of car use – with car ownership more than doubling in Europe between 1970 and 1995, and with an estimated 500 million cars in the world today – has led planners to design cities around traffic specifications, treating people who move by their own locomotion and on unscheduled paths as of little interest, thus effectively encouraging ever-increasing car use.[52] London's grand spaces, like Parliament Square, Piccadilly Circus, Trafalgar Square, Hyde Park Corner and Marble Arch, are all now overwhelmed by cars; and shopping mall planners, Haussmann's heirs, employ a mechanist rhetoric he would have well understood when they speak of magnet stores, of generators, of flow and of pull.

What is lost, with this, is the idea of a city in which one can, as it were, 'read' buildings at a pedestrian's pace. A whole network of previous pedestrian expectations are thereby lost. The words we used to describe the street reveal something of the expectations that were formerly brought to it. We find a whole set of words – path, track, parade, promenade, mall – all of which are connected with ways of proceeding on foot. All of these words indicate that pedestrian movement along a set way, the delimitation of the way as an extended public space, is deeply embedded in human experience. From its

inception, the road was freighted with metaphoric meaning,[53] everyone knows that the path to salvation is straight, that if a criminal is to reform his ways he must try to go straight, and that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Hegel, expressing his admiration of the French revolutionaries, wrote to a friend in January 1807 of the *ancien régime* institutions as being like 'those children's shoes, become too tight, that hinder the gait, and that the revolutionaries soon get rid of'. This was more than a figure of speech; it echoed Roman law which had already long ago decreed that 'where the feet are, there is the fatherland'.[54] Engels was aware of the same phenomenon; in June 1848 he remarked that 'the first assemblies take place on the large boulevards, where Parisian life circulates with the greatest intensity'.[55] He was right; for the proletarian masses from the country and the suburbs, the simple fact of penetrating to the heart of Paris, in 1848 and in 1871, of feeling under their feet its avenues and its opulent streets, was a tangible appropriation, a concrete way of diminishing a real and measurable social and political distance between the masses and the concentrated power of the bourgeois state. Goebbels, after his fashion, could not but agree; in 1931, during the National Socialists' struggle against the Marxist parties in Berlin, he declared that 'whoever can conquer the streets also conquers the state'.[56]

So that when Barthes says that 'we speak our city … simply by living in it, by travelling through it, by looking at it',[57] we can go on to elaborate that thought by saying that the idea of speaking our city is not simply a conceit; for, as Michel de Certeau suggests, the act of walking is to the urban system what the act of speaking is to the language system. The pedestrian act – in analogy with the speech act – may be said, then, to have a threefold 'uttering' function: it is a process of appropriation of the topographic system by the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates language); it is a spatial realisation of the site (just as the act of speaking is a sonic realisation of language); and it implies relationships among distant positions, that is to say pragmatic 'contracts' in the form of movements (just as

verbal utterance is 'allocution' and sets up 'contracts' between fellow speakers).[58] There are quite specific ways, then, in which walking may be described as a space of utterance; as speech is to language, so walking is to the appropriation of urban space.

To speak of walking in such a way is at once to illuminate and to etherealise its implications for us. For its effect is more fundamental than that. Walking – and we are not speaking here analogically – is a quintessentially *integrative* activity. That this is the case is indicated by forms of expression by means of which we refer to deficient processes of walking, as, for instance, when we speak of someone being impeded, or walking disjointedly, or limping, or tottering, all of which terms signal the absence of the integrative force the necessary quality of which is otherwise found to be present and efficacious in the act of walking. Walking demonstrates to me that I am what Husserl calls a 'total organism'[59] articulated into a number of particular organs, that in walking I am able to constitute myself as a coherent organism; the unity of my body parts is precipitated by the kinaesthetic feelings associated with the actual movements of my body as I walk. Every time I engage in the activity of walking I am building up a coherent world, a world which contains both the near-sphere of familiar and accessible experiences and the far-sphere of unfamiliar and unknown things; I bring together both spheres in a unified 'ensemble'. Moreover, if my lived space is present to me in the form of what Husserl calls a 'fixed system of places', that is because walking establishes 'oriented things' as identical things and hence constitutes a 'steady system of places'.[60] Walking is at once an act of organic self-unification, and an act which builds up for me a coherent environment. Whereas for Lacan the 'mirror stage' generates an *illusory* sense of the unity of the subject, for Husserl the activity of walking precipitates an *authentic* integration of the subject.

If our spatial memory is to work effectively a certain measure of stability is required; the rhetorical art of memory is insistent upon, and could not have existed without reference to, a stable system of places. This stability of our place system is eroded by the

production of speed, because machines which produce mobility – trains, automobiles, planes, bicycles, elevators, escalators, moving walkways – undermine the assumption that what is visible is also stable. Machines of mobility endow what is seen with a quality of evanescence. Early accounts of railway travel highlight the difficulty of recognising anything in the landscape traversed beyond its broadest outlines; Burckhardt observed that on a train journey 'it is no longer possible to really distinguish the objects closest to one – trees, shacks, and such: as soon as one turns to take a look at them they already are long gone'.[61] This new experience of evanescence, initially produced by the railway and later celebrated in Impressionism and Futurism, is now ubiquitous and incessant; today's fast-moving transport constantly mobilises our field of vision. The fleeting sight of giant billboards, the momentary view of a street scene, a peripheral view glimpsed through the window of a train – these have long become naturalised as everyday occurrences, and habitualised over again through our perception of film. Film – which gives us, in Godard's words, truth twenty-four times a second – is the visual art form that most effectively articulates this reconfigured perception; developing alongside one another, the medium of film and the topography of the city problematise the assumption that the visible is the stable.

3

The effects of the production of speed are reinforced by a third feature of contemporary human settlement: *the repeated intentional destruction of the built environment.* When Engels wrote *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844,* he found that workers' housing, which was built by speculators for fast profits, was constructed to last for only forty years. According to a survey conducted in 1936, most buildings in London other than the relatively few recognised 'historic' ones were, on average, renewed in thirty years and abandoned in sixty; the rate of replacement in the central sections of American cities is faster.[62] Long ago, returning to

New York after many years of absence, Henry James saw an urban landscape possessed by 'the reiterated sacrifice to pecuniary profit' and 'in perpetual repudiation of the past'; 'we are only installments, symbols, stop-gaps', the proud villas seem to say, 'we have nothing to do with continuity, responsibility, transmission'.[63] Throughout his American journey Tocqueville was struck by what seemed to him to be the impermanence and insubstantial character of American settlement; houses seemed to be stage sets rather than buildings meant to last, and the city was treated by its citizens simply as a complicated installation of offices and restaurants and shops for the conduct of business.[64] Buckminster Fuller was making essentially the same point when he described New York as a 'continual evolutionary process of evacuations, demolitions, removals, temporarily vacant lots, new installations'.[65]

At the beginning of the 1930s Siegfried Kracauer devoted considerable reflection to the transience of urban topography. He found in Berlin its unparalleled exemplar; and he took Paris as his point of contrast. A German from Berlin who comes to Paris, he wrote, 'believes he has been transplanted into a huge provincial town' because 'life and society seem to him to be those of a hundred years ago';[66] for Paris 'carries the signs of age upon its brow. Out of the pores of its houses there spring up memories.'[67] Paris, like Berlin, has 'endless streets', but no Parisian streets compare with what he calls the 'unhistorical nature' of Berlin's streets. The Kurfürstendamm of the early 1930s, for example, embodies a kind of empty flowing time in which nothing is allowed to last.[68] The 'rootlessness' of its ever-changing shops 'effaces the memory' of what they have replaced. On the Kurfürstendamm what has passed away 'makes its exit without leaving behind any traces'; 'the new enterprises are always absolutely new and those that have been displaced by them are totally extinguished'. 'When one Berlin shop is replaced by another', let us say a tearoom by a confectioner's shop, the former's reality 'is not merely superseded but so completely displaced as if it never existed at all. Through its complete presentness it is plunged into a state of being

forgotten from which no force can ever any longer rescue it.'[69] Many of Berlin's buildings had been stripped of their ornaments which formed a kind of bridge to yesterday; only the marble staircases that glimmer through the doorway preserve memories, those of the pre-war world first class. In other cities, too, images of squares, company names and enterprises are transformed; 'but only in Berlin are the transformations of the past so radically stripped from memory'.[70] Berlin is quintessentially 'the place in which one quickly forgets; indeed, it appears as if this city has control of the magical means of eradicating all memories'.[71]

This process of creative destruction was propelled by the invention of new building materials, making for lightness, openness and speed. The world of the late nineteenth century was obsessed by what was coming to be felt increasingly as the burden of the past. It did not yet know the unbearable lightness of being. Its urban fabric was a world of painstakingly finished ornamentation, carefully chipped and smoothed surfaces, cobbles, stairs, ponderous piers, immovable monuments. The urban fabric of the early twentieth century was one of high-tensile steels, steel-reinforced concrete, high-strength glass, walls reduced to reflective skins, highways, escalators, demountable exhibitions.

This process can be perceived to be the pattern of construction under capitalism. Both our urban hierarchies and our transport systems demonstrate the acceleration in the pace at which our produced landscapes are transformed.[72] Capitalism continually restructures our urban landscapes through suburbanisation, deindustrialisation, gentrification and urban renewal. And capitalism annihilates space through its fixed investment in rail, road and port systems, because at some point the impulsion to continue to annihilate space must make these initial investments obsolete and redundant. Marx already recognised the principle at work.[73] The more production comes to rest on exchange, he wrote, the more important do the physical conditions of exchange – the means of communication and transport – become for the costs of circulation; while capital must on the one side strive

to tear down every spatial barrier and conquer the whole world for its market, it strives on the other side to annihilate this space with time. So whether we look at our urban hierarchies or at our transportation systems we see the same process at work: there is a perpetual struggle in which physical landscapes appropriate to capitalism's requirements are produced at a particular historical moment only to be destroyed or disrupted at a subsequent historical moment.

Cultural memory is eroded in this process because the *building blocks* of the city have been broken down.[74] The district, the square, and the street were the basic building blocks of the city, and it is their breakdown which generates a diffuse cultural amnesia. The district: because the dense district, a more or less well-defined cluster or group, has been replaced by a scattered distribution of slab-like buildings which can only be recognised or imagined as a totality or gestalt from an aeroplane. The square: because the square, an enclosure, what Lynch called a 'distinct and unforgettable place', has been modified in its overall effect on the city gestalt by the parking lot. And the street: because the modern street has become merely a means of communication in a grid system which is, to be sure, orderly and in that sense easy to describe, but is nonetheless altogether unmemorable; with respect to the United States, even if not to Europe, we may ask ourselves: was that 92nd Street or 93rd Street? When urban structures are no longer in this way clearly defined in terms of districts, squares and streets, our public environment comes to be made up out of spaces that are not so much localised places as rather spaces that diffuse and erode the public realm.

The breaking down of these building blocks, the district, the square and the street, is not simply a direct attack on the body of the city; it is an indirect attack on the human body too.[75] For man is, as Marcel Mauss said, the rhythmic animal, socially and individually; and the human body, for its rhythmic action, requires privileged points in space and time: that is to say, central and high places as well as borders and thresholds. Our cities seem to be losing such social forms irretrievably. We have witnessed this radical change

during the last three decades. Since the early 1960s, in the metro-politan centres of the developed world, city fabrics largely inherited from the nineteenth century have been overlaid by the twin develop-ment of the freestanding high-rise and the serpentine freeway. This erosion of public space, and entailed in this the effacing of cultural memory, which always needs an architectonic prop, finds expression in Melvin Webber's concepts of 'community without propinquity' and the 'non-place urban realm',[76] and in Robert Venturi's assertion that Americans do not need piazzas because they should be at home watching television.[77]

That last remark, fatuous though it is, nevertheless yields a further clue as to the nature of the transformation in question. This change may be expressed by saying that an architecture of volume is being replaced by an architecture of surface. There is an eerie sense in which this mutation was anticipated long ago. Victor Hugo once put into the mouth of Claude Frollo, the Archdeacon of Notre Dame, who could still 'read' his cathedral and its surroundings as one might read a hieroglyphic scripture, the prophecy that the book will bring about the death of architecture; by which he meant not ornately hand-lettered books but machine-printed books which im-plied the ideal of universal literacy. For, so Hugo thought, once the mysteries could be spelt out from printed words, the desire for a built 'summa', the cathedral or the monument, would atrophy and grad-ually dissolve the very idea of a humanly made environment charged with meaning.[78] But modern space is, as it were, space wiped clean. The architectural and urbanistic space of modernity tends precisely towards a homogeneous space, in which everything is alike, in which marks and markers are added after the fact; all of which reinforces a physical discomfort and a feeling of desertedness. We may even speak of this architectural and urbanistic space of modernity as a post-Cartesian space, at least in the sense that it is the space of blank sheets of paper, drawing boards, plans, scale models and geometrical proportions.[79] And, adapting Victor Hugo's anticipation, we may say that it is not the book but the screen that will bring about the death

of architecture. This is why Venturi's remark about the piazza being superseded by the television discloses a truth behind its falsity; for all its silliness it indicates a real trend. An architecture of volume is replaced by an architecture of surface, buildings by screens, monumentality by miniaturisation. There is a sense, then, in which one of the most important features of present-day architecture is the screen on which we are presented with particles in motion, the screen where omnipresent visibility appears in the twin manifestation of news circulation and advertising copy.

A powerful source of contemporary cultural amnesia thus has to do with the nature and the life history of the material objects with which people are customarily surrounded. Today, we are surrounded everywhere by the conspicuousness of consumption through the multiplication of objects and material garb. Large department stores, with an abundance of consumer goods and clothing, provide the primary landscape of affluence; our markets and our malls are, so to speak, a second nature of prodigious fecundity. The contemporary indoctrination into systematic, organised consumption is the extension, in the present, of the earlier indoctrination of rural populations into industrial labour which occurred in the nineteenth century. From the standpoint of cultural memory, it is not simply the fecundity of consumable objects, it is rather their *lifespan*, that is significant.[80] The norms of social standing impose a time-scheduling, a metabolism, of increasingly rapid cycles. As Baudrillard has said, we are now living in the period of objects; we live by their rhythm, according to their cycles. Today it is we who observe the birth and death of objects; whereas in all previous civilisations it was the object and the monument that survived the generations. Compared with all previous history, the life expectancy of people and that of buildings is now reversed. The accelerated metabolism of objects generates the attenuation of memory.

Of all potentially obsolescent objects, the sign is pre-eminent. Its rate of obsolescence seems to be nearer that of an automobile than that of a building, and, potentially, it is faster still. The reason for

this is not to be found in any process of physical deterioration intrinsic to the sign; it is to be sought, rather, in what competitors with other signs are doing. We can learn here from Las Vegas.[81] Las Vegas presents intensified communication along the highway. The little low buildings, grey-brown like the desert, separate and recede from the street that is now the highway; their fake fronts become disengaged and are turned perpendicular to the highway, as huge, high signs. The most unique, the most monumental parts of the Strip in Las Vegas, the signs and casino facades, are also the most changeable; it is the neutral structures behind them that survive a succession of facelifts and a series of themes up front. As Venturi says: the sign is more important than the architecture; if you take the sign away, there is no place.[82]

The signs in the Strip in Las Vegas signal a cultural mutation in the history of material objects. Of most material objects at most times we can say that, even though they do not speak to us, we can understand these material settings because they have meanings which we habitually decode; or, better still, we should say that we frequently do not consciously decode them because they seem not to resist our capacity to decipher them. The very notion of decoding objects as signs becomes necessary to us to the degree that there is an inbuilt obsolescence in the world of material things. Before this transformation in the cultural biography of things they are not so much conceptual hieroglyphs as rather sites which we inhabit. This is why we can learn from Las Vegas. For we can distinguish three successive, though overlapping, cultural stages. There was the *theory* of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign propounded in Saussurean structural linguistics; then, somewhat later, there was the *application* of the theory of the arbitrariness of the sign to cultural studies generally; and then, there was the conscious accelerated *material fabrication* of systems of arbitrary signs flaunting their sign-nature.

I have said that of all potentially obsolescent things the sign is pre-eminent. But what if things cease to exist? Put like that the

question seems preposterous. But let us take as a definition of a thing something that can be held in the hand. The hand characteristic of the human organism grasps things; and many of the things grasped by the hand are held and manipulated so as to be transformed, whether in agrarian or in manufacturing cultures. Indeed, the idiom 'I cannot grasp this', which is employed to make emphatic our inability to understand something, is grounded in the fact that the human hand traditionally grasps things and by this means learns to handle and so control the environment; just as the idiom 'I can handle this' reassures my interlocutor that I am faced with a situation with which I can confidently cope; just as, again, the expressions 'too hot to handle' or 'playing with fire' indicate my settled belief that I am confronted with a circumstance with which I think it imprudent to get entangled. But the information that now floods the environment – perhaps it is telling that the verb we commonly use is taken from the element of water which cannot be held in the hand – displaces from our milieu the things in it that could be grasped by the hands. A computer memory or an electronic image are non-things in the sense that they cannot be held in the hand; they can only be accessed by the fingertips. Any attempt to grasp the electronic pictures on a television screen, or the data stored in computers, or reels of film or microfilm, is bound to fail. These non-things, as Vilem Flusser[83] calls them, are of course trapped within things: silicon chips, cathode-ray tubes, laser beams. But these non-things are impossible to get hold of by the hands. These non-things that proliferate all around us we call information. An ever larger proportion of humanity is engaged in the production of information, an ever smaller proportion is involved in producing things. Humanity is becoming dominated by those who have control over this type of information: the construction of atomic power stations, weapons, genetic engineering. The lack of solidity of the culture from which things are increasingly absent is becoming our daily experience. All that is solid melts into information.[84]

4

We can see, then, that these phenomena are mutually reinforcing and interlocking. The increased scale of human settlement, the production of speed, and the repeated intentional destruction of the built environment, generate a diffuse yet all-encompassing and powerful cultural amnesia; and they are in their turn generated by the capitalist process of production. Modernity, or at least that component of it represented by the economic expansion of the capitalist process of production, produces cultural amnesia not by accident but intrinsically and necessarily. Forgetting is built into the capitalist process of production itself, incorporated in the bodily experience of its life-spaces.

NOTES

1. R. S. Lopez, 'The crossroad within the wall', in O. Handlin and J. Burchard, eds., *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), pp. 27–43.

2. P. Hohenberg and L. H. Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe, 1000–1950* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), p. 51; N. J. G. Pounds, *An Historical Geography of Europe, 450BC–AD1330* (Cambridge, 1973). 'At a time when most English towns had fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, Florence and Milan each had over 50,000 residents … small English market towns bore little resemblance to the port cities of the Mediterranean culminating in the imperial city, Constantinople. It is important not to reduce this fascinating array of places to the bland homogeneity of "the medieval town".' Hohenberg and Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe*, pp. 27–8.

3. Ibid., p. 51.

4. Ibid., pp. 32–3.

5. W. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe: Regime and Architecture, 900–1900* (Eng. tr. Chicago and London, 1988), pp. 35, 38.

6. J. de Vries, *Economy in Europe in an Age of Crisis, 1600–1750* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 151.

7. On new baroque capitals see J. de Vries, *European Urbanization, 1500–1800* (London, 1984).

8. M. Girouard, *Cities and People: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven, Conn., 1985) pp. 258, 344–5.

9. See the description of the cities of Flanders, especially Bruges and Ghent, by Hieronymus Münzer, in *Itinerarion sive Peregrinatio excellentissimi viri* [1495]; *Voyage aux Pays-Bas*, intr. M. Delcourt (Brussels, 1942).

10. Braunfels, *Urban Design in Western Europe*, p. 94.

11. Ibid., p. 302.

12. Ibid., p. 94.

13. Hohenberg and Lees, *The Making of Urban Europe*, pp. 305–6.

14. E. Hobsbawm, 'Labour in the great city', *New Left Review*, 166 (1987), pp. 39–52.

15. I. Katznelson, *Marxism and the City* (Oxford, 1993), p. 217.

16. R. M. Pritchard, *Housing and the Spatial Structure of the City* (Cambridge, 1976).

17. J. E. Vance, Jr, 'Housing the worker: determinative and contingent ties in nineteenth century Birmingham', *Economic Geography*, 43 (1967).

18. J. Prest, *The Industrial Revolution in Coventry* (Oxford, 1960).

19. F. Trowell, 'Speculative housing development in the suburbs of Headingley, Leeds, 1838–1914', *Publications of the Thoresby Society*, 59 (1983).

20. D. J. Olsen, 'Victorian London: specialization, segregation, and privacy', *Victorian Studies*, 17 (1974); A. S. Wohl, 'The housing of the working classes in London', in S. D. Chapman, ed., *The History of Working Class Housing: A Symposium* (Newton Abbot, 1971).

21. Katznelson, *Marxism and the City*, pp. 200–1.

22. R. Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (New York, 1990), chapter 2.

23. On this point generally see Hobsbawm, 'Labour in the great city'.

24. P. Joyce, *Work, Society, and Politics: The Culture of the Factory in Late Victorian England* (New Brunswick, 1980), stresses that the factory town of the mid to late nineteenth century 'retained more of the village than it acquired of the city. Understood as the "walking city" the factory town grew by cellular reproduction, the town slowly absorbing factory neighbourhoods in its expansion.' Until the introduction of tramways and bicycles 'the link between home and work remained firm until these severed it', pp. 118–19.

25. Katznelson, *Marxism and the City*, p. 235; P. H. J. H. Gosden, *The Friendly Societies in England* (Manchester, 1961). For the construction

of local 'mappings' in the lived spaces of the nineteenth-century city see J. A. Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (Boston, 1987).

26. R. Aminzade, *Class, Politics, and Early Industrial Capitalism: A Study of Mid-Nineteenth Century Toulouse* (Albany, NY, 1981).

27. M. Gottdiener, *The Social Production of Urban Space* (Austin, Tex., 1985).

28. This feature of contemporary settlement space is investigated by S. Sassen, *The Mobility of Labor and Capital: A Study of International Investment and Labor Flow* (Cambridge, 1988); D. Massey, *Spatial Division of Labor* (London, 1984); A. J. Scott, 'Flexible production systems and regional development: the rise of new industrial spaces in North America and Western Europe', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 12 (1988); P. Hall and A. Markusen, eds., *Silicon Landscapes* (Boston, 1985); N. S. Dorfman, 'Route 128: the development of a regional high technology economy', *Research Policy*, 12 (1983); M. Piore and C. Sabel, *The Second Industrial Divide* (New York, 1984); J. Urry, 'Class, space and disorganised capitalism', in K. Hoggart and E. Kofman, eds., *Politics, Geography and Social Stratification* (London, 1986).

29. R. Rogers, *Cities for a Small Planet* (London, 1997), p. 27.

30. M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford, 1996), p. 403.

31. Ibid., 403–10. 'What is most significant about megacities is that they are connected externally to global networks and to segments of their own countries, while internally disconnecting local populations that are either functionally unnecessary or socially disruptive … this is true of New York as well as of Mexico or Jakarta. It is this distinctive feature of being globally connected and locally disconnected, physically and socially, that makes megacities a new urban form.' Ibid., p. 404.

32. K. Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960).

33. Frank Lloyd Wright, 'The Industrial Revolution runs away', *The Disappearing City* (1932), cited in K. Frampton, *Modern Architecture* (London, 1993), p. 190.

34. See P. Virilio, *Speed and Politics* (New York, 1986).

35. A. Friedberg, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Post-Modern* (Berkeley, 1993), p. 3.

36. Ibid., pp. 82, 84, 152.

37. E. Dimendberg, 'The will to motorization: cinema, highways, and modernity', *October*, 73 (1995), p. 95.

38. Ibid., p. 107.

39. Ibid., pp. 121–2, 136–7. See D. E. Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996).

40. J. R. Griffith, 'The complete highway: modern transportation in the light of ancient philosophy', *Landscape Architecture*, 47 (1957), p. 352.

41. Dimendberg, 'The will to motorization', p. 136.

42. Quoted in D. Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* (Oxford, 1985), p. 15.

43. Quoted in ibid., p. 16.

44. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, p. 422.

45. On displacement in contemporary Paris see N. Evenson, *Paris: A Century of Change, 1878–1978* (New Haven, Conn., 1979); for a brief account of the effects of the breakup of *arrondissements* and their cultural memories see R. Cobb, 'The assassination of Paris', *New York Review of Books* (February 1980).

46. P. Virilio and S. Lotringer, *Pure War* (New York, 1983), p. 64.

47. On the contrast between the space of places and the space of flows see M. Castells, 'High technology, economic restructuring, and urban-regional process in the United States', in M. Castells, ed., *High Technology, Space and Society* (London, 1985), pp. 11–40. R. Williams, 'Problems of the coming period', *New Left Review*, 140 (July–August 1983), pp. 7–18, examines this phenomenon from the point of view of what he calls 'mobile privatization'.

48. R. Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (London, 1971), p. 23.

49. D. Appleyard, K. Lynch and J. R. Myer, *The View from the Road* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p. 10.

50. U. Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality* (San Diego, 1986).

51. Rogers, *Cities for a Small Planet*, pp. 9–10.

52. Ibid., pp. 35–6.

53. J. Rykwert, 'Learning from the street', in *The Necessity of Artifice* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 105–13. On the road as a literary topos see M. M. Bakhtin, 'Forms of time and chronotope in the novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin, Tex., 1992), pp. 120 ff.

54. Virilio, *Speed and Politics*, p. 23.

55. Ibid., p. 3.

56. Ibid., p. 4.

57. R. Barthes, in *Architecture d'aujourd'hui* no. 153 (December 1970 – January 1971), pp. 11–13.

58. M. de Certeau, 'Practices of space', in M. Blonsky, ed., *On Signs* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 129–30.

59. E. Husserl, 'The world of the living present and the constitution of the surrounding world external to the organism', in F. A. Elliston and P. McCormick, eds., *Husserl: Shorter Works* (Notre Dame, 1981), p. 249.

60. Ibid., p. 250. On Husserl on the subject of walking see E. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1997), pp. 224–8.

61. Quoted in W. Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey* (New York, 1979), p. 59.

62. K. Lynch, *What Time Is This Place?* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), p. 37. 'In American cities, the urban landscape is constantly changing, as old buildings are demolished to make room for more efficient uses of their sites, as failing offices and shops are replaced by successful newcomers, as restaurants and cafés come and go. With none of the restrictive licensing still widespread in Europe and Japan, which protects old commerce by suppressing the new, with construction permits easily granted, few public institutions exempt from market forces and hardly any buildings protected by architectural preservation orders, American cities very readily adapt to shifting economic pressures, both large and very small. Overall this makes them very much more efficient as places of work and business than European cities – and much less of a home for their inhabitants. Turbo-capitalism leaves no room for emotional attachments to old buildings, old bookshops, old neighbourhood venues, or anything else for that matter. Not surprisingly, Americans are greatly attracted to such places as Paris, Rome and Kyoto, so much less adaptable and efficient than New York, Chicago or Los Angeles, so much more hospitable to human life. Parisians, Romans or even Kyoto's famously traditionalist citizens hardly lead lives of unexamined tranquillity, but among them one constantly feels that their strong sense of belonging to their cities

leaves their happiness far less dependent on the size of their disposable income.' Luttwak, *Turbo-Capitalism*, pp. 222–3.

63. Quoted in D. Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience* (Oxford, 1985), p. 28.

64. Sennett, *The Conscience of the Eye*, pp. 51–2.

65. A. Toffler, *Future Shock* (London, 1970), p. 51.

66. S. Kracauer, 'Pariser Beobachtungen', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 13 February 1927.

67. S. Kracauer, 'Ein Paar Tagen Paris', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 5 April 1932.

68. S. Kracauer, 'Strasse ohne Erinnerung', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 16 December 1932.

69. Ibid.

70. S. Kracauer, 'Wiederholung', *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 29 May 1932.

71. Ibid.

72. Harvey, *Consciousness and the Urban Experience*, esp. pp. 36–7, 60–1.

73. K. Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of a Critique of Political Economy* (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 538.

74. See C. Norberg-Schulz, *Existence, Space and Architecture* (London, 1971), pp. 80–6.

75. Rykwert, *The Necessity of Artifice*, pp. 131–3.

76. M. Webber, *Explorations in Urban Structure* (Philadelphia, 1964).

77. R. Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York, 1966), p. 133.

78. See Rykwert, *The Necessity of Artifice*, pp. 131–3.

79. See H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, 1991) esp. pp. 200 ff.

80. See J. Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, ed. M. Poster (Oxford, 1988), pp. 29–30, and Toffler, *Future Shock*.

81. R. Venturi and D. Scott-Brown, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972). Baudrillard has also argued that Las Vegas and Los Angeles should be viewed as paradigmatic for the spaces of late capitalism, the ultimate urban form so far reached in America. See his 'Hyperreal America', *Economy and Society*, 22 (1993), pp. 243–52.

82. Venturi and Scott-Brown, *Learning from Las Vegas*, p. 12.

83. V. Flusser, *The Shape of Things: A Philosophy of Design* (Eng. tr. London, 1999), pp. 86–92.

84. As Susanne Küchler has suggested, what may now be coming to an end is the idea of memory as the conscious apprehension – the grasping – of experience through material objects and material remains; memory as a force may be shedding its material trappings on which we have so long relied. S. Küchler, 'The place of memory', in A. Forty and S. Küchler, eds., *The Art of Forgetting* (Oxford and New York, 1999), p. 54.