

CITIZENHOOD: PROOF AGAINST THE CENTURY

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The twentieth century has seen two periods during which old citizen “citadins” in french, or “citadinite” for citizenship societies have been the centre of scholarly interest. The first period corresponds to the first third of the century, when these societies were still under the influence of the traditional urban order at a time when colonialism was seeking to impose its domination. The second corresponds to the last third of the same century; and it coincides with a time when old cities throughout the Arab-Muslim world appeared to be definitively condemned by the exodus of their original population and destined to dilapidation, degradation and neglect by the public authorities.

Between the middle of the century and the beginning of the 1980s, this interest weakened, even disappeared, except in history and anthropology, from the field of urban research—as though citizens “citadins” in french, or “citadinite” for citizenship and their spaces, whatever their nature, were not factors worth considering. The renewed interest in these societies over the past twenty years or so is a genuine paradox, since, in terms of population, citizenship society has been in constant decline and, in terms of the occupation of space old cities have been reduced to mere islets within the spread of modern urbanization.

To follow the evolution of a society’s socio-cultural state and its relation to the urban—that is, to its citizenship—from the beginning to the end of the twentieth century requires an overall assessment of the whole of research into Arab-Islamic cities. Such a work is too vast and goes beyond the framework of these brief considerations about the evolution of a notion (some would say of a concept) that was long regarded as a totally obsolete and inadequate tool for the analysis of urban societies.

For historical and cultural reasons, and for reasons of territorial configuration and political structure with regard to urban powers, citizenship poses complex problems: does it have the same meaning everywhere, in all cities and at all periods of their evolution? There are, here, risks of anachronism, of inadequate comparison, and of the obscuring of the specific in the interests of global character. What of

citizenhood in the past and in the present? In what sense are present cities urban? This paper will try to answer the above questions by showing the long evolution of the concept and the magnitude of its polysemy.

A citizenhood nowhere to be found: The uneasiness aroused by these questions is accentuated when we search for the meaning of the French term *citadinité* ("citizenhood"). Not a single French dictionary provides the meaning of the word; only the word *citadin*, of Italian origin, is mentioned. The term *citadinité* comes from the north of Italy, where the oppositional pairing *cittadino/contadino* reflects the intense nature of the relations between inhabitants of town and countryside resulting from the political domination of Italian cities over the space of their rural environment. This relation is an essential element in citizenhood relations. In the literature at the beginning of the century, the term *citadin* designated inhabitants of the traditional city. The English language does not truly have this term, since the coined word *citizenhood*, derived from French, is rich in civic connotations but does not restore the complex meaning of *citadinité*.¹

The same difficulty arises in the Arabic language. Ibn Khaldun used the concept of *al-'umran al-hadari*, meaning city population, translated in the Pléiade version as *civilisation urbaine* ("urban civilization"). At present, a neologism, *al-tamadduniyya*, is attempting to retrieve the sense. Not everyone finds this term satisfactory. Some prefer the term "urban culture," so as to avoid a semantic shift towards *al-tamdin*, meaning urbanization.

The temporal and spatial dimension of citizenhood also poses a problem. Citizenhood of a city is not a matter of its size. A small city may have a profound citizenhood, while a huge agglomeration *may not*. Hence, citizenhood knows no linear *progression*, but is rather subject to discontinuities, to periods of *limited influence* or rapid development. As such, it is important to understand citizenhood not as some stable,

¹ "Citizenhood": we have coined this equivalent from the French word *citadinité*, since it seems to us best to express the idea of belonging to and in a city. The adopted translation is from *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective. Point de vue sur les villes du Maghreb et du Machreq*, Franco-British Symposium, London, 10–14 May 1984, ed. Kenneth Brown, Michèle Jolé, Peter Sluglett, and Sami Zubaida (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), 250.

intangible state, but rather in terms of its evolutionary and enduring dimension.

Nevertheless, despite the possible ruptures between citizenship in cities and potential urbanity in megalopolises, the links between historical spaces, individuals and groups do not disappear just like that. Citizenship as a socio-cultural relation, one that remains meaningful from one generation to the next, structures the life of society, marking, sometimes indelibly, practices, attitudes and mental representations of both individuals and contemporary social groups. Its influence may express itself in the form of a dominant cultural model, with apparent diverse effects on the architecture and decoration of houses, and on furnishing, on the organization of domestic space and on gastronomy.

How does it relate to the human and social sciences? The conditions, within which reflection on citizenship appeared, the reasons for its eclipse, for some thirty years, from the middle of the century on, and the context of its re-emergence into the field of disciplines attempting to give it a resolutely problematic dimension, are closely bound up with the contexts of mutations within the social and human sciences. The start of the century is marked by the quest for an autonomous status for disciplines in the process of being formed; the end of the century, by contrast, is characterized by the desire for reconciliation, and in some cases convergence, through collective research projects starting from problems jointly worked out. Each period, however, reveals a crisis in citizen society and a crisis in the problems used in order to understand it in its totality. Hence, the interest in citizenship is revealing, *simultaneously*, dysfunctions within society and the incapacity of available tools to permit a better understanding of the circumstances and particularities of the crisis. In *both* periods, “attempts” to foster an urban “science” are not the smallest contribution made by studies on citizenship to the progress of human and social sciences regarding the city.

The complexity of citizenship as a concept lay behind many ambiguities: misunderstandings, disagreements about its pertinence for *present* times, acceptance of its use so long as this was restricted to the Arab-Islamic world, or outright rejection, with citizenship regarded as a tool to be consigned to the museum of accessories. The reversing of these tendencies finally allowed citizenship to be given the *rights of the city*, in the wake of debates punctuated by a series of scholarly meetings and pieces of collective and individual research, over a long road whose principal stages we shall try to trace *over the past century*.

1. *Historical conditions of the construction of citizenship*

The periods of major interest vis-à-vis the societies of traditional cities are a reflection of the profound changes that have calibrated the historical development of Arab-Islamic countries over the course of the century: colonization was marked by a profound *political upheaval*, which saw Arab-Islamic cities fall, some for the first time in their history, under foreign domination. The beginnings of independence saw the initial emergence of a *demographic revolution*; one that gave rise to a complete reconfiguration of social hierarchies and a remodelling of spaces within the city. Urban populations were becoming the majority in a number of countries where, to use the expression of Jacques Berque, a rural *rusticité* (“rusticity”) had up till then been the dominant feature. Authoritarianism, and a turning back to religious values, was symptomatic of considerable disarray. The elite turned out to be incapable of containing the rise of internal and external perils, in a context aggravated by under-development, and of social and spatial disparities that transformed urban space in cities growing ever more gigantic. These upheavals were accompanied by a triple deprivation—political, cultural and economic—that revealed the extent of the crisis of urban society, and, at the same time, explained the liveliness of the debate on the evolution of citizenship.

Initial attempts at research into citizenship took place, first, in Morocco. The late colonization of the country was the underlying reason for a remarkable conservation of the old fabric, and for the relative maintenance of its population during the first decades of the Protectorate.²

To understand better, and so dominate better

At the beginning of the colonial conquest, cities had put up no notable resistance to occupation. It was assumed that the inhabitants would be hostile to the new invaders (especially those of “Fez, a *city* regarded in the West as being more fanatical and more closed to foreigners than other cities”), but the reality had reserved an exquisite surprise. “The

² The term *bidonville* (“shanty town”), the initial term used to designate poor urban growths, was for some time specific to Morocco, before (*to the best of our knowledge*) becoming generalized in its use and before its realities were regarded as a subject for research. Would this not be a paradox with regard to citizenship?

first contact of citizens with westerners was without violence. The urbanity of the bourgeoisie was met, on our side, by a firm benevolence and an attentive respect for traditions. They [the citizens] are refined and cultivated people, who maintain in the city what remains of a glorious Moorish civilization."³

However, once the sway of the colonial power had been ensured over the countryside, it was the cities, especially "citizen cities" like Fez and Salé, which, from the 1930s on, represented the major challenge to long-term colonial continuance by virtue of their passive or active resistance. A similar situation occurred in Aleppo, affecting the relation between urban society, the national movement, and the Mandate authority.⁴ In fact, the urban elites had lost the power over their own city, *along with* their own souls, while the State, whose protection they expected, was falling apart. This deprivation felt as if their entire universe was put into question. It was the start of an irremediable crumbling of the old urban order. "At that point there began, for citizens of pedigree, a time of doubt, of loss of landmarks, of a kind of flickering of referential thought."⁵

The "colonials" had not waited for these reactions before paying the most considerable attention, from the beginning of the Protectorate, to knowledge of citizen society. The strategic requirements for this knowledge were best expressed by Georges Hardy, the eminent co-worker with Lyautey, an ethnographer more than a geographer, a "geopolitician" on colonial issues, and one of the most prominent pioneers with regard to reflection on citizen society. In his work *L'Âme marocaine d'après la littérature française*,⁶ he set out one of his objectives. "We aim to convince authors of every kind that their effort should preferably be oriented towards the only research that really counts in the troubled times in which we live: *the knowledge of men before us and beside us.*" As

³ Robert Montagne, *Révolution au Maroc* (Paris: Edition France Empire, 1957), 76.

⁴ Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, "Early, recent and future research on the modern history of Aleppo: a review and some proposals," in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 290.

⁵ Robert Escalier, "Élites, pouvoirs et ville dans le monde arabe: éléments d'analyse de la cidadinité," in *La cidadinité en questions*, ed. Michel Lussault and Pierre Signoles, Collection Sciences de la Ville no. 13, Fascicule de Recherches d' Urbama 29 (Tours: URBAMA, 1996), 29.

⁶ Georges Hardy, *L'Âme marocaine d'après la littérature française* (Rabat: Éditions du Bulletin de l'Enseignement Public du Maroc, No. 73, April 1926; Paris: Librairie Emile Larose, 1926).

a politician he recognized the contribution of ethnographers in the realization of this objective. "Most of them were not simply passersby; they remained in contact with the living realities. They wrote not only for academics. They worked jointly with men of action representing the colonial authorities."⁷

A veritable landscape of hierarchies within urban society was established in the chapter of his work entitled "citizens" (*citadins*).⁸ This term designated, at one and the same time, the city and its inhabitants. The *mode of life and cultural activity* determined the quality of citizenship of a city like Fez, here taken as a model. "Fez is the city of citizenship *par excellence*: we find there a real luxury in housing, clothing, in the table kept; the language is purer than elsewhere, and literature is more honoured. The inhabitants of Fez, the Fassis, justly lay claim to forming the chief oasis of culture in the Empire."⁹ Fez was also a true city by virtue of its *functions*. It provided "that rare combination of a learned city, a center of academic, religious and theological studies, existing alongside a very active market and a vast manufacturing workshop; all Fassis are born *tajer* (traders), by heredity and by tradition, like the Phoenicians of Antiquity." Fez was accounted a true city, finally, by virtue of its *capacity for integration and effulgence*. It "functioned, at one and the same time, as a melting pot and a centre: a *melting pot* where various ethnic elements came together in an amalgam of original Moorish and citizen imprints; a *centre* whose effulgence reached to the most remote parts of the old Berber bloc, to soften it and enlighten it little by little."

However, in order to be better supervised, "citizen cities" needed to remain apart from the colonial city. This seminal divorce, reflected in the heterogeneous nature of twentieth-century cities, was governed by "the absolute principle of the separation of the Moroccan city from the new European cities." This marginalization of traditional cities in space was accompanied by their being thrust into a remote past; for Lyautey "the old medinas were medieval wonders that had to be absolutely preserved." Georges Hardy recognized that few people escaped "the temptation to conceive of Morocco as a surviving remnant of our Middle Ages, and it is true that, in various aspects, a medina necessarily evokes, even today, after fourteen years of French Protectorate,

⁷ *L'Âme marocaine*, 2, 155.

⁸ *L'Âme marocaine*, 118, 119, 117.

⁹ Montagne, *Révolution au Maroc*, 81.

many an image of our past." Robert Montagne stated, for his part, that "...citizens form among themselves a society somewhat analogous to the one constituted in the Middle Ages in the great commercial cities of Europe."

The diagnosis was clear then: an unchanging society had endured through time, within a framework frozen over centuries. The expression of citizenship was understood through the prism of representations that observers had of their own past. Georges Hardy was not, however, fooled by this vision. This similitude between the past of one society and the present of another was, for him, a mere "superficial analogy." "No possible parallelism should intrude between this social state [of Morocco] and that of feudalism," he concluded, following an analysis of the characteristics of feudalism in general and the feudal city in particular.

From utilitarian aims of knowledge to the scholarly project

Georges Hardy strove to go beyond "false analogies in time that are added to false analogies in space, to aggravate the confusion." As such, he undertook to demonstrate the scope of his project and to indicate the methods of investigation used. "It should be understood that this *Âme marocaine* is, in the final analysis, simply the outcome of experiences, and that our preoccupations go beyond the domain of colonial politics." The intention was clear. This study of citizen society should not be undertaken for circumstantial reasons, to provide a plan of campaign designed for "colonials." Its aim was to understand the "psychology" of citizens through investigation of their social categories and their professions, of their powerful men and their notables, with a view to acquiring "the sense of the indigenous." This latter was characterized by patience, sensitivity and divination, and necessitated "prolonged, intimate, meticulous mingling with the groups to be studied. There exists a whole psychology to be reconstituted in order to know what affects this sense and attracts it, what shocks and repels it."

This intuitive knowledge should take account of systematic rules: psychological study should, in addition to systematically exploiting documentary sources, "delve everywhere into psychological information, should clarify it, supplement it, and cross-check it against scientific data." He adds: "All the sciences of humanity are already participating, more or less widely, in this movement of research." In setting itself within the evolution of "sciences of humanity," his seminal project for a new

research method stated that “literature, in its full sense, was inspired by scientific concern, and scientific literature never lost sight of the psychological object in view.”¹⁰ This showed a manifest intention to build a bridge between disciplines for the new integrated knowledge that was being formed.

Who are the protagonists in the seminal project for this new knowledge?¹¹ First, ethnographers “concerned more with local psychology than with general psychology.” Considering the subject of their studies, still in the course of being developed, and their uncertain research methods, G. Hardy underlined the necessity of knowing the practical lives of citizens, of knowing their attitudes towards religion, to go beyond research basing itself on folklore. He insisted on the need to interpret their tales and legends, so as not to neglect “the rules of the genre, the gap between observation and account, between the real and the imaginary.” He wanted to combine research on institutions with the study of law, and to consider arts that needed to be liberated from “conventional orientalism.” He noted that linguists “were of an astonishing fecundity,” but that they separated the language from the spirit, making little “study of syntax, which ought to provide us with high quality psychological documentation.” Finally, he advised, in order to create this new “collective psychology,” the methodical exploitation of a new source, of “the plays of physiognomy, gesture and attitude,” together with the “relations between details of everyday life, and of ways of thinking, with the different postures of the body.” To this effect, he cited P. Odinot, for whom “the way of sitting modifies everything: the height of windows, the height of furniture, musical instruments; *the whole of life*.”¹²

The contributions of the various disciplines to his wide-ranging research project were unequal. For Georges Hardy, professional geographers “seem reserved to excess; they are held back by scientific scruples. *Psychological geography*, which has nowhere acquired a clear form as yet”

¹⁰ *L'Âme marocaine*, 7, 10, 2, 154–55, 164, 155.

¹¹ See Nellia Dias, “Une science nouvelle? La géo-ethnographie de Jomard,” in *L'Invention scientifique de la Méditerranée* (Paris: Éditions de l'EHESS, 1998), 159–183. This article retraces the history of the constitution of ethnography within disciplines.

¹² *L'Âme marocaine*, 157–159, 162. Concerning the way of sitting, Maurice Le Glay observes: “We are not a squatting race, and I have the impression that we may not, without losing our superiority over this [Moroccan] people, adopt their ways of life and methods of work.”

could expect nothing from the discipline, though it should recognize, in geographers, the merit of challenging the pitfalls of determinism.¹³

Georges Hardy gave history a prime place within his procedure, since “historical explanations add nuance to ethnographic and geographical considerations,” thus restoring particularities to the local character. For him, “it is clear that in the study... of every city, every social group, historical explanation should play an eminent role.”

A powerful preoccupation to begin with, a concern for knowledge, even a project for putting together a new knowledge about “collective psychology,” in order to understand not just citizens but the population of the country as a whole. G. Hardy’s ambition to develop “scientific” research methods was still at the stage of a sketch. He himself recognized its limits. “A whole treatise needs to be written about the method,” in order to resolve the more general problems.¹⁴

Though produced in quite different circumstances, Marcel Clerget’s work on Cairo showed similarities, up to a point, to this will to provide new problems of research on the city. In 1934, M. Clerget “was the first to demonstrate [in his thesis on the geography of Cairo] that it is not possible to grasp the urban fabric without its historical, juridical, economic, demographic or social dimensions. It was a huge project, which was misunderstood at the time”¹⁵ by the academic bodies in France, as was the case with G. Hardy’s attempt.

This incomprehension, with respect to the scope of these attempts to re-found disciplines geared to research on the city, was merely the initial indication of a sustained crisis which was to affect the renewal of knowledge on traditional cities and the evolution of their societies.

¹³ Georges Hardy criticizes ethnography, which cannot explain everything and advances ethnic temperament as a once-and-for-all piece of data, needing to be supplemented and corrected by geography. Concerning this last discipline and its practice by some, “naturally, we neglect, out of hand, that false geography, inaccurate and full of sentiment, which explains everything and nothing, based on the poorly determined influence, merely apparent, of atmosphere and landscape, and which depends almost exclusively on sensibility and ideas preconceived by the observer.”

¹⁴ *L’Âme marocaine*, 164, 153.

¹⁵ Robert Ilbert, “Méthodologie et idéologie, la recherche française sur les politiques urbaines en Égypte,” in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 103–114.

Citizenhood as a link with the world: civilization or culture?

Two people have played an essential role in identifying the characteristics of citizenhood. They represent the *final researchers of the colonial era, the final witnesses of "citizen life."*

The picture of Fassi society painted by Roger Le Tourneau shed a clear light on every aspect of the complex life of a large city in two stages of its evolution, at the beginning and at the end of a period stretching over half a century. Despite his intimate knowledge of Fassi society, however, he makes no mention at all of its citizenhood. He analyses its evident expression in all the aspects of the city and of the life of society, yet does not once use the term. He speaks of a "great effort of moral codification," but especially about the success of the people of Fez in "creating a way of life specific to them, rich, full of nuance, and applying to every action of life, from the way of eating and receiving, to the highest intellectual relations. Such an effort is called civilization." He underlines the "masterpiece" of Fassis' collective life, which is "reasonable and realistic," and notes that "they had succeeded in constituting an original civilization even within Morocco, refined without excess and at ease with itself."¹⁶ This is a stance, among others, within the tradition of colonial ethnography, which makes the term "citizenhood" more complex and enriches its meaning.

To Jacques Berque we owe the use of the term "citizenhood," and also its conceptualization. The expression "citizenhood as perfection of a culture" makes the concept more complex and its use more delicate, since it refers to the polysemy of the notion of culture—which does nothing to simplify matters. He did not, however, content himself with this elliptical formulation. Citizenhood was analyzed in a way that made it part of judicial anthropology rather than embodying an ethnographic or sociological approach. Nourished by Islamic sciences, he was better fitted than ethnographers to understand the profound impact of institutions on the state of society and the status of the city. Huge agglomerations possessing all the attributes of a "city," with a mosque and sermons, *hammams* and *suqs*, could nevertheless not claim to be "citizen cities." "Hence, to the statistical threshold that agglomerations

¹⁶ Roger Le Tourneau, *La vie quotidienne de Fès en 1900* (Paris: Hachette, 1965). See also, idem, *Fès, avant le Protectorat. Étude économique et sociale d'une ville de l'Occident musulman* (Casablanca: Société Marocaine de Librairie et d'Édition, 1949), 668 photos and maps. See pages 38, 302.

need to pass, in order to be designated *cities*, we should add another threshold, related to what we call *citizenhood*.” He cited evident cases to support this approach. “In the Tunisian Sahel, Msaken, which had some twenty thousand inhabitants, is not considered a *medina*, while Monastir and Mahdia are such with only half the number.” He made the same observation in the eastern sphere. “Paltry cities like Nablus in Palestine and Zahle in Lebanon breathe a lively citizenhood,” while huge agglomerations in Egypt were not “citizen cities.” Probably sensing the limits of this observation in defining citizenhood, he offered the following suggestions: “It stems from impalpable elements: urban tradition, historical memories, bourgeois outlines, and specialization in certain work, historical or spiritual aspects. Then there must be material ones: physical appearance, surrounding walls, architectural distinction.” Through computations and progressive touches, he came to specify that the passage from sizeable village to city depends “on the function the city has to fulfil according to the Muslim ethic: *to be a place of exchange and testimony*.” By showing the intricacy, in the practice of civil law, of exchange and testimony, he developed around the theme of the *suq* and the mosque the elements that form the basis of contradictory rationales of the *unity/division* that govern urban life: between the peasant and the city-dweller with regard to exchange, and between the unitary expression of the city, by virtue of the sermon mosque, and the outpouring of testimony through the multiplication of weekly sermons in quarter mosques.

The citizenhood approach could not avoid a close analysis of urban institutions: relations between the *waqf* and the market, the relations of these pious foundations to urban services, the fundamental division between the exercise of property and right deriving from property accumulation, which has an effect on the entire city economy. For J. Berque, the Muslim city is not an ideal of virtue and organization, since “there reigns a tension between the reality of the city and its juridical ideal.” The jurisprudence vis-à-vis the city and its institutions, represented by *fiqh*, functioned as a regulating element. “The *fiqh* is a rigorous censor of citizenhood.” Because “the city, despite its vices, is the place of faith, the place of law.” This is probably what R. Le Tourneau meant by civilization when speaking of citizenhood.

J. Berque did not, in determining the sense, even the “essence” of citizenhood, content himself with reflections arising from juridical anthropology. In order to attain this objective, he crossed group lineages with their professions, so as to define a “tri-functional order” which formed

a concrete basis for citizenship. It is “a synthesis whereby individuals of different lineages overlap within a system of activities organized according to a ternary alternation: craft, trade and study. A family is city-dwelling to the extent that it is represented in the three activities of the city. This is still the case today with Fez, Salé, and Tunis.”¹⁷

With regard to the spatio-temporal organization of the city, J. Berque noted two dimensions: the physical structure of the city and the mutations of its temporalities. Contrary to the traditional ethnographic and geographical trend, which gave no consideration to the spatial organization of the city, he peremptorily affirmed: “to speak of the city is to speak of a plan.” As such, he showed a marked tendency to link physical fact, social act and political action closely together, as a means of conceiving the urban in its spatial complexity.¹⁸ It is probably with regard to time in the city that he showed the changes that were beginning to affect the urban order. “We pass,” he notes, “from a seasonal conception of the passage of time, from a liturgy that intertwined work and days throughout the year, to the conception of a daily life that encloses you.” Hence, the city changed rhythms as it witnessed the change in status of elements of its tri-functional citizenship order, namely those of craftsman and merchant. He noted the displacement involved in “the passage from the city of craftsmen to that of workers,” while the trader continued to ignore the bank and worked only through storage. However, the absence of analysis, by the author, of the role of the *‘alim*, one of the personages symbolizing citizenship in the city, is surprising. Was he already propounding the eclipse of the latter’s role in the process of mutation affecting the city, on the religious level especially, as a prelude to the time of fundamentalisms?

These elliptical visions of the changes affecting urban society reflected J. Berque’s consciousness of the dynamics that were actively placing citizenship at the heart of this tension of which he spoke, as a motor of ineluctable change in the city. Twenty years after his seminal text,

¹⁷ All the above quotations are from the seminal article written by J. Berque in 1958: “Médinas, villeneuves et bidonvilles,” in *Opéra Minora* by J. Berque, vol. 2 (Paris: Éditions Bouchene, 2000), 239–272.

¹⁸ Mohammed Naciri, “La médina de Fès, trame urbaine en impasses et impasse de la planification urbaine,” in *Présent et Avenir des Médinas (De Marrakech à Alep)*, Fascicule de Recherches d’ Urbama 10–11 (Tours: URBAMA, 1982), 237–254. See in particular the table on page 247, on the hierarchy of spaces, forms of framework and their insertion in the urban fabric.

J. Berque wished that “having lost its old *h'isba*, the guarantor of citizenship morals, [Fez] could find a morality of business and manufacturing.”¹⁹ For a new citizenship?

The reign of disciplines with a “prescriptive finality”

In the weakening of city structures and spaces under the influence of urbanization, the old medinas were forgotten. They served as an outlet for the rural flow. The former citizens and public authorities accommodated themselves to this evolution; the former for economic reasons, sometimes mercantile, the latter for motives of socio-political regulation. Dilapidation and degradation had taken hold of the old structure, due to the abandonment of maintenance and to density pressure stemming from compression and grouping. In Morocco, as in Algeria, rehabilitation projects were considered, but they remained unrealized.²⁰ In Tunisia, an urge to modernization threatened the destruction of the old city in Tunis through the planning of major inroads. Reconsideration, however, saved the city from real destruction.²¹ “Many a time destined to the wrecker’s pickaxe, the great Tunisian medinas nevertheless evolved, maintaining an original character while giving examples of surprising adaptation in every field of citizen life.”²²

In general, disciplines whose main subject of study and research was urban found themselves helpless before the complexity of citizen society and the particularities of its articulations with regard to historical urban spaces. “In this field, the conceptual voids, and the non-reference to the social, are as marked from Fez to Damascus and from Sanaa to Algiers.”²³

On the level of action, city administrators and experts from the large international study bureaux, and from urban research institutions,²⁴ did

¹⁹ Jacques Berque, “Fès, ou le destin d’une médina,” in *De l’Euphrate à l’Atlas*, vol. 1, *Espaces et monuments* (Paris: Sindbad, 1978), 380–415.

²⁰ Daniele Pini, “Croissance urbaine et sous intégration, la Casbah d’Alger,” in *Présent et Avenir des Médinas*, 121–144.

²¹ Jellal Abdelkafi, “La médina de Tunis, des études aux actions,” in *Présent et Avenir des Médinas*, 237–255.

²² Paul Lowy, “Évolution des grandes médinas tunisiennes,” in *Présent et Avenir des Médinas*, 103–120.

²³ Jean-Marie Miossec, “Recherche urbaine et politiques urbaines en Tunisie,” in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 115–140.

²⁴ Michèle Jolé, “La recherche sur les villes arabo-musulmanes et la notion de

not in fact (with some exceptions) have the specific practical knowledge allowing them to intervene in an urban fabric filled with symbols and social values. Intervention in modern cities is based on techniques difficult to adapt “without putting into perspective the role of medinas in twentieth-century cities and without envisaging a large-scale social policy for the poor populations living there. It should also be noted that traditional architecture and urbanism of the medina type have, with rare exceptions, not been reproduced.”²⁵ Policy-makers acted as if the city had no memory. Hence their actions had no imperative leading them to refer to history.

This crisis of perspectives in the urban research of the 1960s and 1970s resulted from a triple convergence: that of the difficulty urban disciplines had in leaving the beaten tracks of monography, the calculable results of the growth of cities and the description of their activities and functions; that of urban engineering, which regarded traditional cities as chaotic and could not comprehend the rationale of space hierarchy and the capacities of traditional urban institutions for framework and integration; and, finally, that of States, whose management of cities was conceived more as an instrument of political control than as a tool for development.²⁶ The time frames directing their actions were short ones, and geared to political goals; they were based on technical means of resolving society’s problems.

From the middle of the century on, individual research had taken a direction contrary to dominant approaches in the study of urban phenomena. Three currents open to the different approaches of the social and human sciences made their appearances: the first in the Maghreb, the second in Egypt, and the third in Lebanon and Syria. Their aim was to grasp the urban in its totality, to understand the change within its contradictions, to understand tradition and modernity with their ongoing tensions.

politique urbaine, instrument de classement ou instrument d’analyse,” in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 93–102.

²⁵ Miossec, “Recherche urbaine,” 124. See also, idem, “Identité tunisienne: de la personnalité géographique d’un pays du Maghreb, du Monde arabo-musulman et de la Méditerranée,” *Revue tunisienne des sciences sociales* (Tunis, Ceres) 36, no. 118 (1999): 43–91, especially, 52–58.

²⁶ Mohammed Naciri, “Les politiques urbaines, instrument de pouvoir ou outil de développement?” introduction to *Politiques urbaines dans le Monde arabe*, ed. J. Métral and G. Mutin, Collection Etude sur le Monde Arabe 1 (Lyons: Maison Méditerranéenne, 1984), 13–42.

2. *Resurgence of interest in the urban*

The anthropology of Morocco was mainly Anglo-Saxon and rural during colonization, citizen-based and North American following independence. From the 1960s on, the contributions of the new generation—whose most eminent representative has been Clifford Geertz²⁷—approaching anthropology from different disciplinary fields, have in various ways distanced themselves from the colonial literature on traditional cities.

In the Maghreb: the contributions of anthropology

The *Ahl Sala*²⁸ was the first work to analyse, in depth, the intimate mechanisms whereby the citizen's personality was formed. It is an accurate analysis of the life of the citizen community, one that restituted, throughout the cycle of life, how and in what circumstances—notably the manifestations of the sacred impacting on existence—the individual and the community are involved in complex processes of socialization. Citizenhood took the form of an art of living, of a behaviour ethic translated into practices of exchange and opening out, through activities, celebrations and religious rituals. It showed how society had changed over a century of history, through multiple ruptures which had not in any way worn down the cultural unity of the community. The progressive creation of a hierarchy in Slawi society, and its deeply rooted conservatism, has not weakened its capacity for adaptation and cohesion. For the Slawis, bonds linking individuals within a social and cultural structure constituted a fabric of total coherence, which gathered in social groups organized into networks and antagonistic coalitions. This is not the least of the paradoxes of its citizenhood.

After the fashion of J. Berque, who stressed in his analysis of the traditional city the central role of the *suq*, whose “frequenter determines an area in space and a unity in economic and social life,” the team of

²⁷ Daniel Cefai, “Le *sûq* de Sefrou, analyse culturelle d’une forme sociale,” introduction to and translation of Clifford Geertz’s contribution, “The Bazar economy of Sefrou,” published in *Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society: Three Essays in Cultural Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). Translation entitled *Le sùq de Sefrou sur l’économie du Bazar* (Paris: Édition Bouchene, 2003), 9–53.

²⁸ Kenneth L. Brown, *People of Salé: Traditions and Change in a Moroccan City (1830–1930)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976). French translation: *Les gens de Salé, les Slawis, traditions et changements de 1830 à 1930* (Casablanca: Eddif, 2001).

anthropologists led by Clifford Geertz undertook a highly detailed study of the complex relations pertaining to the suq. The choice of the city of Sefrou, whose inhabitants compete with those of Fez in terms of citizenship, gave the team the chance to explore the multiple aspects of the role of the suq in urban life: “Kinship, obligations, exchanges, residence, linguistic affiliation are seen as ‘social frames’—relational possibilities and available social resources—and not of themselves the bases of political alliances or economic associations.”²⁹ Through analysis of the role of the *waqf*, the *zawiyas* and the corporations [*‘hanta*, plural *‘hmateh*] in the animation of economic and social life in the suq, C. Geertz shows how social frames and alliances were in action in the “bled Sefrou,” at once city and countryside, structured by the networks of clientele, associations and alliances which formed the citizenship framework, through the relation between country and city, as essential elements in the life of citizen society.³⁰

Beyond this economic and cultural anthropology, called “the ‘*Muslim city*,’ traditional, pre-colonial, pre-industrial or simply medina,” the concept of an Islamic specificity remains meaningful and implicit in this new current of anthropological studies of the urban.³¹ The progress achieved in the knowledge of the old cities of Morocco has nonetheless paved the way for a slow resurgence of considerations of citizenship in the last third of the twentieth century.

In the Mashriq: the traditional city, between material degradation and rehabilitation through historical research

Trends in anthropological thought were not the only motivators of the renewal of reflection on the urban phenomenon in the Islamic world. Compared to large cities constantly overflowing the historical nucleus, the future of this latter became ever more uncertain. But the

²⁹ K. Brown, “The uses of a concept, the ‘Muslim City,’” in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 73–82. See especially, 79.

³⁰ André Raymond, “Les relations villes-campagnes dans les pays arabes à l’époque ottomane XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles,” in *La ville arabe, Alep, à l’époque ottomane XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1998); see also Thierry Boissière, *Jardiniers et société citadine dans la vallée de l’Oronte en Syrie centrale*, 2 vols. (Lyon: Université Lumière 2, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, 1999). It is an example of citizenship integration comparable to the citizen-gardeners of Salé. Mohammed Naciri, “Salé Etude de géographie,” *Revue de géographie du Maroc* Publication du Centre Universitaire de la Recherche scientifique, 3–4 (1963): 11–82.

³¹ Brown, “Uses of a concept.”

more the obliteration of its importance in cities (sometimes becoming megalopolises) was accentuated, the more it became a major subject of interest for historical research. This paradox results, on the one hand, from the place and the conception of the patrimony in public policies relative to the city, where modernization and its challenges leave hardly any place for real patrimonial policies for old cities, and, on the other hand, from the increasing interest of the scholarly community in the cities of the Arab-Islamic world.

The second area of renewed reflection on traditional cities, after that of the Maghreb, was formed in Egypt, especially around historians like Jean-Claude Garcin and André Raymond, whose work on Cairo in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods gave a new impetus to the renewal of historical research in this field.³² A generation of new historians, preparing their theses under the direction of these two figures, had undertaken innovatory research on spaces and societies in the cities of Cairo and Alexandria.

We shall not analyse all this work here. We intend solely to indicate how they have contributed, from the sixties on, to the opening out of new perspectives for urban research. At a time when the classical research of geographers was unable to explain the global character and complexity of these evolutions, as a result of the dimensions assumed by the modern city in a context of under-development, historians, served by remarkably rich documentary sources, new methods and creative intuitions, succeeded in reconstituting the interweaving of urban frameworks, with regard to the social fabric and the role of institutional frames in the evolution of urban society. This orientation of historical research towards the long term had allowed the restitution of the ruptures and continuities of evolutions, emphasizing the diversity of their dynamics in the past. The premises of a re-creation of reflection on the urban issue appeared in a piece of social historical research carried out by

³² Jean-Claude Garcin and André Raymond have each produced a work of remarkable richness, marking a renewal of historical research on the cities of the Mashriq. See especially Jean-Claude Garcin, *Un centre de la Haute Égypte médiévale: Qus* (Cairo: IFAO, 1976). Also, "Note sur la population du Caire en 1517" and "Le Caire" (in collaboration with Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Sylvie Denoix), in *Grandes villes méditerranéennes du monde musulman*, ed. J.-C. Garcin, with the collaboration of J.-L. Arnaud and S. Denoix (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2000).

André Raymond, *Grandes villes arabes à l'époque ottomane* (Paris: Sindbad, 1985). This work is a synthesis whose major interest lies in its coverage of problems regarding urban structures, institutions, functions, and activities that had not been sufficiently considered before. The Orientalist approach has been firmly transcended.

J. Berque on a quarter of Cairo³³ at the end of the sixties. He was probably the initiator of what we might call today a geo-history crossed with anthropology, which consisted in researching, over an extended period, the determining impacts of political, economic and social decisions on the structure of urban space in its historical evolution. Hence, it is possible, thanks to these past evolutions, to shed light on the reasons behind present types of behaviour in the face of change hampered by the multiplicity of rationales governing the city.

Thus, the new research has set aside the fixed representations of a single Muslim city whose model of organization has been repeated over the varied face of history. By challenging this vision of an archetype of the *eastern city*, the work of historians showed the dynamics and diversities of organization types in the cities of Cairo and Alexandria, thus marking the factors of rupture and continuity in their physical extension, together with the mutations of their social hierarchy and their links to the dominant powers and social groups that had determined the city's historical evolution.

The results of historical research on institutions, among them the *waqf*, showed the flexibility of relations within citizen societies. Means of adjustment and means of adaptation to urban realities may circumvent the evidently intangible prescriptions of *fiqh*, without questioning the religious basis of a society culturally unified but socially heterogeneous. The spatial division of social categories sheds light on the proportion of poverty and wealth within the urban framework. Traditional cities have known contradictory rationales, the play of powers, competition and battles for control of the city and its resources. However, they have also built up (though sometimes infringed) an ethic that has permitted group life and exchange between individuals. Historical research had not explicitly built a concept of this *culture of living together*, called citizenship; but it showed its constituent elements through the existence of mechanisms of institutional framing and multiple solidarities linking different categories of citizen society, thus attenuating the social contrasts involved. Understood in terms of their cultural diversities, the integration processes of groups and individuals within urban society therefore seemed diverse, contingent, and variable, according to social groups, to their origin and faith, their environment and particular space

³³ Jacques Berque and Mustafâ al Shakâa, "La Gamaliya depuis un siècle: essai d'histoire sociale d'un quartier du Caire," *Revue des Etudes Islamique*, 1974, 45–99.

within the city, along with the forms of framing and socio-political control entailed. Robert Ilbert, in *Alexandrie*,³⁴ evokes “the history [of a citizen community] woven from a heterogeneous framework. Some elements disappear while others are maintained. Time seems to stop while new mutations are being prepared. The historian tries to untangle the threads, reconstitute facts and causes that might, if not explain, at least partially clarify the evolutions, or make them less opaque.” This process is at the heart of the search for a better comprehension of citizenship, especially in its cosmopolitan expression stemming from universality, as this was translated in medieval megalopolises of the Middle East.³⁵

From patrimony to public space: inversion of the role of citizenship

The third area of preparation for reflection on citizenship was in Syria and Lebanon, where geo-history took on an element of anthropology. Geographers, historians and sociologists were attracted by what I might call the *disciplinary overflow*. An iterative process going back into the past, leading to the construction of a representation of the evolution of urban society in traditional cities, beginning from investigations of observable realities in the present city, and going beyond all specialist frontiers. A geographer adopting this approach is not afraid to go back into the past to tackle subjects that normally form part of the competence of a historian, or to explore the present in its political and socio-cultural dimensions, which is the task of a political scientist, sociologist or anthropologist. He does not decline, either, to deal with the relations between the State, the future of the historical patrimony in terms of urban policy and the reaction of the technical, intellectual and political elite to projects, on the part of the Syrian and Lebanese governments, for the renovation of old centres.³⁶ The identification of

³⁴ Robert Ilbert, *Alexandrie: Histoire d'une communauté citadine, 1830–1930*, 2 vols., Bibliothèque d'Étude 112/1 (Cairo: Institut français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1996).

³⁵ Jean-Claude Garcin, “La notion de mégapole,” in *Villes médiévales et orientales*, 3–6. A report submitted at the meeting held on 10–11 February 1995 for the preparation of *Mégapoles en Méditerranée, Géographie urbaine retrospective*, ed. Claude Nicolet, Robert Ilbert, and Jean-Charles Depaule (Paris: Maisonneuve and Larose; Aix-en-Provence: MMSH; Rome: École Française de Rome, 2000). See also J.-C. Garcin (with Thierry Bianquis), “De la notion de mégapole,” in *Grandes villes méditerranéennes du monde musulman médiéval*.

³⁶ Jean-Claude David, a geographer, is typically representative of this current of research. See his article “L'évolution des axes de circulation et d'activités à Alep de

contradictions between local powers and upper levels of decision-making may, thus, provide material for reflection and research in political sciences and in anthropology dealing with public spaces. Transverse thematics, such as rehabilitation policies, problems of patrimony, the originality of institutions of traditional urbanism, attempts at adaptation to change in old quarters, the role of tradition in modern urbanism, nourished meaningful research on the city. Thus was developed a new reading of the historical heritage in its triple spatial, institutional and social dimensions, inducing a reflection on the relation of tradition to modernity. Such a process permitted light to be shed on the sometimes conflicting relations between upper levels of decision-making, local powers and urban elites, giving rise to the emergence of research on the nature of civil society and the forms of public and private spaces within traditional cities, together with the continuities and ruptures of their equivalents in the modern city.

The Lebanese civil war was an essential factor for progress in reflection on the passage from an urban society, in the past governed and regulated by a citizenship based on inter-confessional exchange, to a society of dramatic confrontations between segments whose multiplicity of status had not, in the past, forestalled commerce in its primary sense. It was, thus, possible to see, within a context first of the State's weakness and then of the State's absence, how implacable rationales of power were able to destroy the co-existence of diversity within a society whose relations were founded on codes of behaviour and state of being between the descendants of old citizen generations. Solidarities had knotted together a whole complex network of exchange, inscribed in the centrality of the old fabric of Beirut. There was, thus, a motivation to evoke and study the citizenship which had sunk into war, and to explore the possibility of its mutation into citizenship when the moment of reconciliation came. The most remarkable thing about Beirut's case was the debate on this citizenship as a patrimonial basis

1870 à nos jours: une continuité de développement urbain," in *Présent et Avenir des Médinas*, 255–260; and "Politique et urbanisme à Alep. Le projet de Bab Al Faraj," in *État, ville et mouvements sociaux au Maghreb et au Moyen Orient/Urban crises and social movements in the Middle East* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989), 317–324. See also Nabil Beyhum and J.-C. David, "Du *sûq* à la place, du citadin au citoyen," in *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains dans le monde arabe*, ed. Mohammed Naciri and André Raymond (Casablanca: Fondation du Roi Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud, 1997); and Jean-Paul Pascual, "La Syrie à l'époque ottomane (le XX^e siècle)," in *La Syrie à l'époque ottomane*. See the bibliographical data below.

for the reconstruction of the old centre destroyed by the war.³⁷ In contrast to the colonial era, the understanding of citizenship was not a way of controlling society but rather the means of access to a new modernity. This inversion of the operational value of citizenship from the status of a control tool to that of an instrument for the cultural reconstruction of a citizenship, through the rehabilitation of its urban heritage, was one of the evident signs of its complexity. How, under these conditions, were the relations between citizenship, patrimony and citizenship to be grasped?

3. *Genesis of the formation of a consensus on citizenship*

To judge by the number of collective works, in all the various disciplines, the debate on the Arab-Islamic city, the crisis in the social and human sciences, and the place of the traditional city as a patrimony and an integral part within urban development, has been the subject of abundant research over a period of 20 years. The variety of disciplines, the membership of particular research traditions—European, Anglo-Saxon, Arab, and Japanese—allowed the development of renovated problems on the theme of citizenship. These collective works did not, however, tackle the subject of citizenship directly, with the exception of three collective publications of which we shall analyze certain elements in connection with this concept. They have permitted a direct examination of its validity, and have provided perspectives going beyond objections about the opportunity for, and efficacy of, its use in urban research.

Citizenship rediscovered

Since modern cities agglomerate without integrating, dissolve collective components and shake cultural identities without offering their inhabitants new references to facilitate an anchorage on new solidarities, they hardly facilitate processes of urban integration. Their spatial fragmentation reflects social and economic disparities that are constantly being aggravated, with no perspective for emerging from the crisis.

³⁷ Nabil Beyhum, *Espaces éclatés, espaces dominés: Etude de la recomposition des espaces publics centraux de Beyrouth de 1975 à 1990*, 2 vols. (Lyon: Université 2 Lumière, Faculty of Sociology, academic year 1990–1991). See also M. Naciri, “Succès de la ville, crise de l’urbanité,” *Espaces et Sociétés* (Paris: L’Harmattan), no. 65 (1991): 9–18.

In this context, a Franco-British colloquium held in London in 1984 set itself the objective of “establishing an analytical and comparative assessment of urban research on the Maghreb and Mashriq undertaken in France and Great Britain.”³⁸ Over and above a comparison of institutional research policies on the city in the two countries, debates were launched on the validity of the concept of *Muslim city* and on the specificity of Arab-Islamic cities. Are they Third World cities or have they kept, from their past, a socio-cultural and political element that differentiates them fundamentally from other cities of the world? The differentiation with regard to Cairo, between a traditional city, a colonial city and a megalopolis,³⁹ takes into account the composite nature of the Arab city and allows an understanding of divergences within evolution dynamics: are we dealing with continuity or rupture in time, juxtaposition or fusion in space? Consideration of the urban crisis, of social movements and public policies in urbanism, along with their relation to the rise of the religious element, found their continuations, especially regarding this last thematic, in the second Franco-British colloquium held in Paris in 1986, under the title *État, ville, et mouvements sociaux au Maghreb et au Moyent Orient*.

What strategy might result from research on realities lived, observable and analysed, in terms of general explanatory principles for urban study? And indeed, according to what scale and meaningful magnitude should we apprehend the realities of the social body? Urban anthropology provides a better knowledge of representations, discourse, and the practices of daily life, so shedding light on the forms of sociability within the old fabrics, and, in consequence, measuring the dimensions of change and the transitions towards the societies of modern cities. In his reflections on the recent formation of small Middle East cities in Syria, J. Métral has put forward some suggestions; and these are all the more significant in that they propose a “from the bottom up” understanding of “urbanity” as a cultural identity common to inhabitants of the city since its foundation. Gestation processes of urbanity have supposed the identification of lineages when the small city was first created. “For urbanity to be formed and developed is it not necessary that there should be a number of lineages that establish civil

³⁸ Introduction to *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 10.

³⁹ Ilbert, “Méthodologie et idéologie.” See also *Héliopolis, genèse d'une ville: Le Caire 1905–1922* (Paris and Cairo: Éditions du CNRS, 1981).

codes, among themselves, so as to regulate their neighbourly relations, of cooperation and/or opposition?" Were these the celebrated *nassabs*, the lineages at the base of citizenship evoked by J. Berque? He further indicates that "a supplementary level of urbanity is reached when the territory of a lineage bears its name, becomes a quarter within an agglomeration." This agglomeration would then become part of an autonomous territory and be inserted within a network of neighbouring cities where frameworks of alliance and clientage are deployed to confirm its urbanity.⁴⁰ Certainly we see here some of the constituent elements for citizenship seen in Sefrou and called by J. Métral *urbanity*. Was there reticence on his part to use the same concept? The London colloquium took the initiative in discussing this point. A presentation in the form of research on the archaeology of the concept showed the interest of this path for understanding the past and present transformations of urban societies.⁴¹ However, even though the state of citizenship might be a reality for those living it, or for those who make it a subject of research, the problem still remains: "What research strategy is the most appropriate for its analysis?"

The diversification of approaches taken by the different disciplines and the confrontation of their methods proved to be necessary. The taking into account of sociolinguistics and literature, for example (and recalling, in this connection, the similar suggestions formulated in the twenties by G. Hardy), especially popular literature with all the representations, legends and myths it contains, provided a possible close knowledge of the complex processes of identifying individuals within the social body, or of rupture in the affiliation of identity to the community. "This sociology of the imaginary, of the symbolic, of the poetry of space, of the trace of collective memory, seems to us able to lead to original reflections on cities."⁴² The exploration of Arabic literature might likewise constitute a field of research, as a mirror of the urban imagination, a domain expressing the gestation of changes affecting urban life. The setting up of a discussion panel on citizenship by the Moroccan Union of Writers reflects the interest of citizen culture

⁴⁰ Jean Métral, "Citadinité au Proche Orient," in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 271–282.

⁴¹ Mohammed Naciri, "Regards sur la citadinité au Maroc," in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 249–270.

⁴² Jean-Paul Blais, "Recherches urbaines et villes françaises," in *Middle Eastern Cities in Comparative Perspective*, 53–58.

for literary creation. The theme of the old city is present in novelistic production. The writer Mohammed Berrada gives a special place in his novels to collective and historical memory in the organization of traditional urban spaces.

Urban actors: between powers, structures and culture

Ten years after the London symposium, the colloquium held in Casablanca in November 1994, on "social sciences and urban phenomena in the Arab world,"⁴³ constituted a new phase in reflection on Arab-Islamic cities with a view to following their evolution, to identifying their ruptures and continuities through the vicissitudes of time, and to understanding how Arab-Islamic traditions, from the physical structure of the city to social institutions and architectural forms, were perpetuated, evolved or were transformed; and how they appear today in contemporary cities, or are disappearing before the redoubled blows of modernization.

One of the problems at the heart of the debate was the difficulty in identifying the nature of the dominance of the different cultures that marked cities and acted on the management of their spaces. Indeed, the evolution of these influences over time renders their identification problematic. To what extent did the interpretation of law for a better adaptation to social practices, or the consequence of the management of religious foundations according to the norms of property, influence the mutations of private and public spaces, or favour mixing, or engender the segregation of social categories? From the house to the street and the quarter, how did the forms of organizing space become differentiated, and how are we to appreciate the effects of the interpenetration of populations of different origins on the evolution of these spatial configurations, and on the individualization of social groups beyond their confessions, origin or activities? Do the *zawiyas* and the corporations go across social bodies, irrespective of their status, hence attenuating their awareness of class, when it is known that the Maghreb medinas, or the Aleppo *Mdineh*, or the *madina 'l-qadima* in Damascus, for example, in the Mashriq, were not socially homogenous but had poor and rich quarters simultaneously. On the cultural level, that of citizenship, it was possible to be perfectly well a citizen and also poor. Wealth was

⁴³ Naciri and Raymond, *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains*.

not necessarily a means of integration into citizen society. The length of stay in the urban entity, the nature of the activity undertaken, the alliances or affiliation to corporations or to a network of clientage, could facilitate access. The difference in status was not essentially one of money, but of culture. In Morocco, the authority of Makhzen, within the city, was represented by agents of rural origin, who were not regarded as citizens despite the prestige they had acquired through the exercise of power and through wealth.

These investigations did not solely concern the spatial reading of complex legacies from the past; they also sought to understand the social, cultural and political dynamics and the potential continuation of these into the present. What was the role of the State and/or of populations in the transformation of old cities, following displacements of centralities towards modern cities, and what were the consequences of this for policies geared to their protection, rehabilitation or renovation? Did the inhabitants of cities pass, like the State, “from culture-effect to appearance-effect,”⁴⁴ from the discretion of the traditional city to the ostentation that spreads through the modern city?

The explanation for this state of affairs lies in the major ruptures⁴⁵ citizen societies have experienced. The propositions advanced to identify the mutations in their culture had a double objective: to reconstitute the relations between groups and individuals that permitted social and cultural reproduction, while remaining conscious of the way their identity allowed them to form a united community—one which was not, nonetheless, free of internal contradictions, oppositions and ambiguous relations with the authorities. The other objective was to identify the processes that permitted the integration of individuals within the community of citizens. One of the essential conclusions of this search to identify the attributes of a citizen culture is the quite fundamental need to speak of *citizenhoods* rather than *citizenhood*, so as to grasp the specificities of articulation among spaces and societies characteristic of each urban ensemble. Citizenhood is a historical accumulation subject to transformations, erosions and even multiple mutations. It sheds light on the past culture of old cities; but can it be effective in facing up to present identities and in opening up to modernity?

⁴⁴ Robert Escalier, “Élites, pouvoirs et villes dans le Monde arabe, éléments d’analyse de la citadinité,” in *La citadinité en questions*, 21–32.

⁴⁵ Mohammed Naciri, “La culture citadine est-elle une culture citoyenne?” Preface to the French version of Brown, *Les Gens de Salé*.

The concept of citizenship in the mirror of disciplines

Since the London symposium, the welcome accorded to the concept of citizenship has varied according to the particular discipline involved. In the discussions that followed attempts to explore the concept in depth, the first reactions of geographers were to challenge its pertinence, on the grounds that the notion of citizen culture remained extremely hazy, all the more so in that it made no reference to space. And yet the perception of city territories lies at the heart of representations of the citizen. Space represents, for him, a place of anchorage and identity. The fact of being born and growing up in the same street, of having lived in the same quarter, creates for people, throughout their lives, complicities that go beyond political or ideological distinctions. Subsequent work has shown that citizenship is consubstantial with space. "The citizenship-object thus opens up another access to geographical space... a terrain where the various regulatory registers of the urban group are crystallized." The modern mutations of this group create conditions whereby the regulation is weakened, due to losses affecting the proximity of people and places. In these conditions, M. Lussault asks, "how can the individual link this violently divorced space within a homogenous material, appropriate it, organize it in a formal structure endowed with a meaning for himself and for others, i.e., something that, simultaneously, makes it conformable and distinguishes it?" Social practices may revalorize or de-categorize spaces by virtue of the mobility of men and products.⁴⁶

During a panel discussion of the Union of Moroccan Writers, organized in Rabat in 1996, the geographer Mohammed Ameur conceded that citizenship was a richly meaningful historical accumulation of a highly developed culture, permitting an accurate knowledge of old urban societies. He noted the pertinence of citizenship in explaining the realities of *the city of today*. The heterogeneous nature of rural immigrant populations prevents all integration into the former citizen culture. This has been expressed by another geographer in his statement that "there has been a passing from the integrating city to today's segregating and fragmented city,"⁴⁷ for which citizenship cannot be an

⁴⁶ Jean-Charles Depaule and Franck Mermier, "Chroniques des années 1980," in *Yémen*, ed. Samia Naïm (Paris: Maisonneuve and Larose, 2001), 29–30. See also Michel Lussault, in *La citoyenneté en questions*, 44, 47.

⁴⁷ Escalier, "Élites, pouvoirs et villes," in *La citoyenneté en questions*, 27.

operational concept. These arguments are not entirely false. However, they result from another sense of citizenship, whose polysemy remains a constant stumbling block.

During the Casablanca colloquium, historians found that citizenship provided a partial solution to their quest to identify the cultural influences on space in the traditional city, within the dynamic of their historical evolutions. There remained some objections that the debate failed to clarify. If the notion of network seemed pertinent to an understanding of the functioning rationales of urban societies, citizens' knowledge of filiations by virtue of lineage was contested, since lineage had too strong a rural connotation to be identified as a significant element of citizenship. In the Rabat panel discussion, the same objection was advanced by a rural sociologist. For him, strategies of kinship and of matrimonial alliances were specific to the countryside. And yet, citizens' knowledge of the genealogy of families—and not just their own—permitted them to know the ramifications of networks and to identify the degree of kinship between one another. This was, he considered, a veritable grid for the analysis of individual behaviour and family strategies, and entailed the possibility of adopting, opposing, or simply understanding their rationales. The use of the term *bayt/buyut* or *buyutat*, which might be translated as “family lines,” might remove this double objection.⁴⁸

The disentangling of groups, on the level of the Arab world, by distinguishing *an Andalusí integrative citizenship*, *an associative Ottoman citizenship* and a *Khalijí* (from the term *khalij*, meaning Gulf) *disparate citizenship*, likewise gave rise to a debate on the ambiguities of this representation of the Arab world on the basis of the urban cultures of these societies.⁴⁹ The distinction seems to have been founded on heterogeneous bases: reference to a culture, reference to an empire, reference to a territory—there were discrepancies in the historical levels used. Indeed, a cross-section would have been more suitable for the comparison. In all three cases, however, citizenship was the product of a process of accumulation, though having neither the same nature nor the same historical depth. The first is marked by a specific culture of a society whose historical experience has demonstrated its integrative dimension

⁴⁸ See the debate in Naciri and Raymond, *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains*, 156.

⁴⁹ Mohammed Naciri, “Le Rôle de la citoyenneté dans l'évolution des villes araboislamiques,” in Naciri and Raymond, *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains*.

well enough; the second is a rationale of empire, hence an associative one, one of communities, faiths and ethnic groups within the urban space. The third, for its part, is based on a territory where mobility favours an inclination to dispersal and monetary consideration, a propensity to prodigality; as such, it is dissipative. This is not to prejudge the worth of one at the expense of another. Each type of citizenship has its own characteristics. In the Maghrebi sphere, Tunisian citizens, for example, opposed the power of the Sublime Porte, not the beys who governed them.⁵⁰ The case was different in Morocco, where Makhzen and urban cities had highly ambiguous relations. As such, they were urban groups with different historical experiences; experiences that still mark the contemporary societies more or less, according to the degree of development involved.

A historian—and a citizen, what's more—who intervened in the Rabat discussion panel wished to use not the term “citizenship” (*al-tamadduniyya*), but rather the term *urban culture*—of which, he said, we did not know a great deal.⁵¹ For that reason he proposed an analysis of citizenship in terms of a triangular relation between rural world, Makhzen and cities; and, since these last had seen a regression since the Middle Ages, it was essential to take into account the periodization of their evolution, if we wished to avoid reducing cities to an a-historical model, viewed as valid regardless of the period considered. On the basis of these considerations, he inferred the need to tackle citizenship on three levels—of social practices, of spatial forms, and of values and symbols—if we were to grasp, for example, the relations between the mode of housing, extended family, identity and familial networks. Rupture between the three levels in question produced mutations that caused the traditional city to lose its functionality, thereby reducing it to a refuge for identity and memory, without any possibility of passing from tradition to a new urbanity.

It was sociologists and anthropologists, especially those in urban anthropology, who were the most sensitive to the light that reflection on citizenship might shed on their research into urban societies. Knowledge of behaviour, of citizens' attitudes as seen through their

⁵⁰ Abdelhamid Hénia, *Propriété et stratégies sociales à Tunis (XVI^e–XIX^e siècles)*, University of Tunis, IV Série Histoire, vol. 34, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences (Tunis, 1999).

⁵¹ Abdelahad Sebti, “À propos de la culture citadine”; and Mohammed Aneur, “Observation sur la problématique de la citadinité et de la citoyenneté,” *Afaq, Revue de l'Union des Écrivains du Maroc*, 1996–1998 [in Arabic].

practical use of space, their frequenting of places for social purposes, and their relations on territorial levels accessible to the rhythms of daily life, will permit an understanding of their representations of space, an issue now common to anthropologists and historians. In trying to understand citizenship in its historical dimension and in the way it is lived today, they were able to point out the passage from the heritage of the past, that of tradition, to its present practice open to change, even to modernity. For example: "When we speak of contemporary habitat and tradition, we are not talking only about architecture and architectural types, but also, of course, of usages, ways of living, i.e., of what Henri Lefebvre calls concrete space: *gestures, paths, body and memory, symbols and meaning.*" It is thus possible to distinguish lasting traits of evolution and others that are less lasting.⁵²

In general, taking account of cultures as factors for explaining the evolution of old urban societies makes possible an intelligible reading of present societies in their socio-spatial interstices; a reading that makes sense. The meeting of historians and anthropologists in this field, especially in the interpretative anthropology of C. Geertz, not only allows advancements in the interpretation of the present world but also offers a renovation of "outworn paradigms which had inspired large sections of the research in social sciences from the end of the nineteenth century on."

4. *The redeployment of a concept in the field of human and social sciences*

The reticence of geographers and anthropologists, with regard to citizenship, had been clear from the beginning; it was a hazy concept, they felt, belonging neither to space, nor to the class struggle, nor to citizenship. Its problematic scope could, at most, be of concern solely to the area of Arab-Islamic culture,⁵³ to the exclusion of other cities elsewhere in the world.

⁵² Jean-Charles Depaule, "Contribution au thème 'habitat traditionnel et traditions,'" in Naciri and Raymond, *Sciences sociales et phénomènes urbains*, 215–221.

⁵³ "Reflection on citizenship does not pertain exclusively to the cultural area of the Arab-Muslim world, but is also of the greatest interest vis-à-vis western cities." Such a statement is a measure of the change in attitude towards citizenship. [See the preface to *La citoyenneté en questions*, p. 6. For the relation of citizenship to citizenship, see "*La culture citadine est-elle une culture citoyenne?*"]

Three factors seem to explain the resumption of reflection on citizenship, twelve years after it appeared in the field of urban research: the first is the “spreading” of the theme by the multiplication of research in the social sciences, in particular in urban anthropology, about the thematic “*citizenhood—urbanity—citizenship*” applied to the study of cities in the western world. The second results from theses and research on urban subjects that have shown how citizenship can provide an accessible “way in” for exploring, in an original fashion, the complexity of the urban phenomenon. Finally, there is the role of individual investment in the organization and undertaking of collective reflection on the wealth of meanings, and also of ambiguities—which is of some importance—in the concept of citizenship. We should here cite Ridha Lamine⁵⁴ and Michel Lussault, both geographers. Their work testifies to the pertinence of their contributions in affecting a breathing space for citizenship, beyond their discipline, in the field of the human and social sciences.

The interest of *La citadinité en questions*,⁵⁵ a collective work published in 1996 is that it specifies the *content of the concept* and its multiple *meanings*. Its objective was to “try to construct the object ‘citizenhood,’” since it would be possible from then on to advance further with the concept. It was, first, about “practices of distinction allowing individuals to affirm their membership of a community,” thus establishing a link *between citizenship and identity*. Next was underlined the process of integration within the city and the appropriation of its culture and identity, by individual or collective practices that lead to a *citizenhoodization (istimdan* in Arabic). Finally, *historical citizenship*, wherein the major difficulty lay in the “hiatus between the old order as presented by research [and also by memory] and the present order, this hiatus not having always been thought through with precision.” These clarifications, despite their utility, merely formalize the current perceptions of anthropologists.

Starting from a reflection on the complex elements of the urban fabric encasing both individuals and groups, in “a subtle interlacing of correspondences allowing us to have a place on the social chess-

⁵⁴ Ridha Lamine, *Villes et citadins du Sahel central* (Sousse: Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences; Tunis: Édition l’Or du Temps, 2001). R. Lamine was behind the initiative that led to the publication of the collective work *La citadinité en questions*.

⁵⁵ All quotes are from the text of Michel Lussault, “La citadinité: pour une approche problématique,” in *La citadinité en questions*.

board,” Michel Lussault⁵⁶ affirms the irreducible identity of each of us and of each city. “Of this fundamental complexity, our disciplines—the human and social sciences—wish to discourse. And citizenship might indeed well be an interesting instrument for clarifying the haziness of urban phenomena.”

What then, he asks himself at the end of his itinerary, is citizenship? His answer seems to arise obviously: “Simply the relation of a subject—i.e. a social actor whether he is an individual or these particular actors that are groups and institutions—to an object, in this case, the urban world.” The latter is not “obviously reducible to the spatial dimension only.”

Thanks to the wealth of his references, M. Lussault constantly amplifies the scope of the meaning of citizenship he has developed, almost step by step, by trial and error. Referring to literature, he shows how the individual, before two different urban facts, finds himself facing *the citizenship of belonging* with regard to two possible relations to the urban, “two ways of conceiving the city (his city), of understanding it, of acting in it, and of existing in it,” and of doing the same for those of others; in sum, two modes of relations grasped within the framework of mental schemes of *habitus*. As such, citizenship will be a highly complex *structure of representations serving as a basis for practices*. He attributes, to each social actor, *citizenship*: a protean phenomenon engendering a way of life, a source for a way of acting, for practices that come into being and whose evolution acts, in its turn, on citizenship. Hence the latter integrates technical and intellectual skills, constraints and collective rules, competences of individuals and institutions, allowing “the condensation of personal praxis in a coordinated societal and spatial structure.”

Does this reduction of citizenship to the sphere of individual, and therefore parcelled, competence risk dissipating it, diluting it in fragmentary behaviours, with no production of meaning or anchorage in society and space? However, the fragmentation of urban society, like the explosion of spaces in the city, poses a problem today for individuals who find themselves dissipated within a more or less extended area of mobility. The social networks of insertion and the spatial frameworks

⁵⁶ *Dictionnaire de la géographie et de l'espace des sociétés*, ed. Jacques Lévy and Michel Lussault (Paris and Berlin, 2003).

of inclusion are in fact sewn with *considerable hiatuses*: how do individuals take upon themselves such a scattering of the environments and places of co-existence within the urban? M. Lussault concedes to “representations constituting the immaterial face of citizenship” the virtue of re-knitting social bonds and re-sewing the torn fabric of the citizen’s individual space. Hence, a whole mythology is developed around the identity of space, patrimony and cultural action, in order to give a meaning to a dislocated territory. For him, “the overall citizenship of a society at a given historical moment is deployed in the articulation of all the particular types of citizenship, thus forming a meaningful, complex and dynamic system.”

M. Lussault attributes the diversity of the environment for the production of citizenship, which is a factor in the diversity of its meaning, to “engineers, urban planners, architects, geographers, sociologists, anthropologists, historians, and philosophers, each in their own way thinking they can account for urban reality.” He seems, however, to miss one aspect: that of the ordinary citizen who does not take account of knowledge but rather acts daily through his practice. It is also by virtue of his action that *citizenship emerges into the political space*. The role of citizen confers on citizenship dimensions such that it acquires a power embracing the urban, regardless of localization. Hence citizenship has found itself liberated from its supposedly exclusive land of validity, the Arab-Islamic cultural area. Comparisons with other places of urbanity in the world therefore acquire a meaning and permit the comprehension of the urban through literature, language, signs, *accounts of action* emitted by actors in the political game, and indeed through the media, along with billboards and their effective territorialization, as was the case between fighting factions in Beirut during the war.

Michel Lussault concludes: “True dynamic multi-national configuration, indissolubly linking practices and accounts, setting in motion the meanings, bodies, psyches of each and every one, so as to make one dizzy with its abundance, a maze whose least turning we should try to determine, citizenship seems able to constitute one of the keys for understanding the social world and its spaces.” M. Lussault goes far in his energetic reflection: he extends the multiple meanings of citizenship to American cities. There is ground for doubting the pertinence of such a broadening of the concept to the urban realities of these cities. In fact, citizenship proceeds from a culture of proximity and sociability, while, according to the work of Richard Sennet to which he refers, “the aspect of [American] cities reflects the *great hidden fear* of their inhabitants to *expose* themselves.” Their urban spaces have the

function of “dissipating the threat of social contact.”⁵⁷ We are therefore far from the first meaning of citizenship, which is a genuine construction of the social bond and that of places of co-existence thanks to the constant effort to maintain its continuity.

* * *

Here, then, are two authors, Georges Hardy and Michel Lussault, separated in every way, at the two ends of the century, but who are brought close together by their will to establish a knowledge constituted by means of a scholarly project on citizenship. The motives of the former have been noted: “There will be, in this respect, a whole new discipline to create.” We have also just indicated the scope of the latter’s “problematic approach,” aimed at constructing the object of citizenship. The question posing itself concerns the context in which the desire, or rather the requirement, for the renewal of a social knowledge imposes itself. The path taken by this concept is curiously conjoined with the evolution of the social sciences in their approaches to the city; approaches made up of hesitations and certitudes, progress and regression, even crises, on the way to understanding the structures of space and the configurations of the social body, subjected in the past to slow mutations, but presently faced with a rapid growth that gives rise to transformations in every aspect of life and existence in the city.

Citizenship (or citizenships) seems to become an active concept in moments of crisis. Crises of society? Crises of disciplines? Or both at once? Are these crises consubstantial with the concept? If the answer is yes, citizenship will have permitted, throughout the course of a century, a rich and contradictory reflection on the urban, on the part of producers of knowledge from all disciplines. Is it not some merit for this concept to have helped, greatly, to promote the interrelation of specialists in the social and human sciences, and, therefore, the emergence of the inter-disciplinary approach? Has it not been, too, a way of consecrating citizenship, to have placed it, for the first time, into a French dictionary, a specialized one at that: the *Dictionnaire de la géographie et de l'espace des sociétés*? Finally, might this consecration of a concept, in the wake of a secular evolution, not permit the understanding of the urban, in its infinite abundance throughout the world? Citizenship has some fine days in prospect, to delve ever deeper.

⁵⁷ Richard Sennet, *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design and Social Life of Cities* (New York, 1990). Translation from English entitled *La ville à vue d'oeil, urbanisme et société* (Paris: Plon, 1992).

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