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Cadre de vie. Jean-Luc Godard's *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* (1967), French TV and Archi- tectural Discourse

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panorama shot

Abstract

The article demonstrates how Jean-Luc Godard's *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* (1967) contributed to the contemporary critical discourse on (social) housing estates (grands ensembles). With his work, the filmmaker aimed to show the grand ensemble, or 'the big(ger) picture' of what it meant to live in contemporary consumerist oriented France. The protagonist Juliette Johnson represents the French citizen and simultaneously the metaphor of the Paris Region that underwent a huge transformation. The main interest of the text lies in the use of the 360-degree pan shot and the notion of cadre (frame), as they connect film theory and the contemporary discourse about how the décor, i.e. the (built) environment, influences people's cadre de vie (living conditions). A close reading of two film sequences and a historical contextualisation of architectural discourses and theories is completed by a comparison with documentary TV programmes. While they had fostered the critical discussion about housing estates already before, they used the panorama shot only after *Deux ou trois choses...*

What helps me to find my [film] ideas is the décor.¹ Often I even start from there. ... I ask myself how location scouting can be done after having written the script. One must first think about the decor. ... One does not live the same way in different environments [décors].²

Jean-Luc Godard, 1962

Modern architecture has become disparaging, remaining out of scale with progress in this period of research. Discovering housing is designing environment for the man of tomorrow defining groups, their size, lifetime and development, creating harmony between the individual and society, to reconcile the permanent scale of man which assures continuity with the ever-changing scale of society, and thereby mobility.³

Georges Candilis, architect, 1967

Jean-Luc Godard's third 'research film'⁴ analyses the large-scale 'mutation'⁵ of civilization and demonstrates at the same time a permanent (self-)interrogation about the use of appropriate filmic means when approaching and showing the profilmic object of investigation. *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* was inspired by the filmmaker's long-standing interest in the subject of prostitution – especially through Guy de Maupassant's short story "Le signe" (1886) – that was triggered by the current public debate about sex work in *grands ensembles*,⁶ which is the French term for (social) housing estates. Before and during the making of the film in 1966, Godard announced that his new film should be a document, and that it would be much more ambitious than *Made in U.S.A.*, which was produced in the same period. In a discussion on TV,⁷ he stated that prostitution refers to any paid labour that people do against their will. With *Deux ou trois choses* Godard attempted to uncover the 'grand ensemble' or 'the big(ger) picture' of what it meant to live in contemporary, consumerist French society under Général de Gaulle's politics of the Fifth Republic, established in 1958.

The protagonist Juliette, whom the film accompanies during 24 hours, is an example of a French citizen living together with her family in a housing estate in *Région parisienne*, the Paris Region. Occasionally she prostitutes herself in the city centre in order to buy consumer goods that she might have spotted in ads appearing in magazines which she reads in her apartment or decorating the outside urban environment. The female protagonist is simultaneously the metaphor of the very Paris Region, which underwent a huge transformation in the post-war years. According to Godard, this process of radical change of the built environment reflected a state of prostitution, as it was subjected to the same capitalist regime which was especially detectible in inhuman housing politics. Within this understanding, the *grands ensembles* represent at the same time products and catalysts of this unhealthy, even perverse system for a presumed welfare society.

On the basis of this overarching intertwining of real politics and reel poetics, this paper tackles a specific cinematic form in *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle* that expresses exemplarily the connections between Godard's research in film, architecture and urbanism: the 360-degree pan shot. This study analyses its use in Godard's film and in French TV programmes about the living conditions in *grands ensembles*. The juxtaposition of contemporary French sociological and architectural discourses about *cadre de vie* further demonstrates that Godard, while creating his own critical study, was certainly aware of those debates about deficient quality of life in social housing. With this specific focus on architectural discourses, this paper complements existing scholarship about *Deux ou trois choses* and its interrelations

with architectural history and urban studies. Providing perspectives from different disciplinary fields, existing research contributions that should at least be mentioned here are by Alain Bergala, Aurélie Cardin, Elisa Charbit, Antoine de Baecque, David Faroult, Alfred Guzzetti, François Penz, Katherine Shonfield, Douglas Smith, Matthew Taunton and Jacques Van Waerbeke.⁸

The 360-degree pan towards the end of the film manifests most visibly the filmic interrelationships between a human individual and urban landscape (Fig. 1). At the beginning of the shot, Juliette is framed in the middle of the lower edge and surrounded by the grid façade of a housing block decorated with grey and coloured panels. The two violet ones find their counterpart in Juliette's striped plastic coat. In her monologue, she first remembers an episode earlier that day, and then starts reflecting on her connection with the world. In doing so, she repeats the lines from that earlier scene. While speaking, she turns her head left in order to put the camera into motion: following André Bazin's theorisation of the centripetal *cadre* and centrifugal *cache*,⁹ the 360-degree pan shot visualizes and thus uncovers the *décor* that surrounds Juliette. This panorama is completed when she virtually catches the camera image again with her head now turned right. She closes the circle by facing the camera again.

Volker Pantenburg has aptly analysed this regime of perception: *It is a world whose radius complies with the viewing distance of the camera; a world, which is conceived in a full circle by the eye of the camera.*¹⁰ In this sense, the pan that captures the environment where the action takes place can be understood as literally *plan d'ensemble*. Rather than a *long shot*, which would be the English term, the 360-degree pan shot provides a total view and delimitation of the film. Pantenburg anchors this filmic gesture in cinematic avant-garde and author cinema. In contrast to the urban landscapes in Godard or Bernardo Bertolucci's *Partner* (1968) the permanent circulating movement of Chantal Akerman's short film *La Chambre* (1972) registers back and forth the female director's delimited domestic space, which evokes her exclusion from any artistic movement.¹¹

Analysing *Deux ou trois choses*, Pantenburg mentions only in a footnote that the urbanists – here the architects Clément Tambuté and Henri Delacroix of Cité des 4000 Sud (1956-64) in La Courneuve – who authorized the spatial disposition, co-direct the pan as the placement of the camera is co-determined by their built environment.¹² In fact, for this shot, Godard positioned the actor Marina Vlady in the middle of Cité des 4000 Sud, in between *Barre Renoir*, a slap block that was demolished in 2000 like all the others except one, and *Tour Lecler*, the listed tower building that demarks the centre of the estate. Only the 360-degree pan shot can wholly represent the panorama which surrounds Juliette, and, more precisely, only from a camera situated at this very standpoint.

The notion and syllable *pan* (Greek for 'all') comprises with regards to both form and content Godard's overarching intention to fully register the condition of contemporary French society, whose way of life was influenced by its surrounding *décor* – an awareness that Godard shared, of course, with architects, urbanists, and sociologists, among other experts. In addition, the concept of *decorum* – often used synonymously with the term *aptum* – which has its origins in ancient poetics (Aristoteles), rhetoric (Cicero, Horace, Quintilian) and architectural theory (Vitruvius) interrelates scales and proportions with appropriateness and aptness.¹³ In 1968, the architect Émile Aillaud, for example, warned in his article "The dangers of prefabrication" against the negative conditioning of society. He argued that its members' individuality was at risk through industrially, i.e. visibly serially produced architecture.¹⁴ In that regard, Juliette has a double function: as an inhabitant and occasional prostitute she is literally imprisoned¹⁵ in mass production and consumption, which is re-



Fig. 1. 360-degree pan shot at *Cité des 4000 Sud* in *La Courneuve* © Argos Films © 2004 DVD Argos Films

presented by the suburban *grands ensembles*. The centre of Paris, in turn, is the place where she has to sell her body in order to be able to afford the colourful but all too similar consumer goods. She knows them from the magazines that she reads at home at the periphery. Covered by her shiny plastic coat and surrounded by a gloomy façade without history, Juliette is also the metaphor of the Paris Region, which is planned according to economic means. Literally standing within this environment, Juliette gives the decisive impulse for the camera movement, which captures this geometric and standardized environment surrounding both the camera and herself. Therefore, this panoramic shot connects a circular perspective of form as well as content.

According to Godard's whispered comment about the 'gestapo of structures', this cinematic form could remind of the disciplinary and social control due to the rational building typology promoted by the state. Thus, the 360-degree pan shot within an enclosed architectural surrounding that is fully registered through the circular camera eye could suggest the perceptual and built disposition that Michel Foucault would theorize in 1975 as the panoptic gaze in his famous book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.¹⁶ But rather than such a centrifugal understanding of the shot in terms of a dispositive of surveillance, Juliette's confinement is evoked here through a circling camera movement with a centripetal effect. Through their illusionist integration at the centre of this panning, spectators identify even more with the protagonist. The 360-degree pan shot mediates and summarizes here strikingly in one filmic gesture that the surrounding built environment delimitates and overwhelms Juliette as its inhabitant.

Juliette is not the only person in this shot who is dominated by the gigantic, grid architecture, which is an equally important protagonist of the film. In a window at the upper edge of the frame, two young inhabitants can be recognized (Fig. 2). In addition, a little later in the film another shot of the façade shows two girls leaning through the window;¹⁷ they seem delighted to be filmed.



Fig. 2. Two girls in the housing estate where Juliette lives

The presence of (real) women and children is representative of the contemporary panorama of *grands ensembles* that was widely mediated by French TV. *Deux ou trois choses* alludes especially to these widely known moving images through a series of female appearances. In mostly staged interviews, women talk about their personal living and working conditions or about their everyday life, leisure or about what makes them happy or afraid. These scenes bring to mind TV reports and documentary films – most prominently *Chronique d'un été* (1961) by Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin or *Le joli mai* (1963) by Chris Marker. However, according to Alain Bergala these interviews are directly inspired by

Roberto Rossellini's method, which integrated small stories in the main plot of his neorealist films *Roma città aperta* (1945), *Paisà* (1946) and *Germania anno zero* (1948). In his pre-script entitled *Choses à filmer*, Godard indeed collected 21 persons and peripheral events.¹⁸ Furthermore, the comparative study of this document, contemporary TV reports and a short version of the script with the title *Les étoiles filantes*, taken from his principal reference,¹⁹ reveal that the filmmaker originally wanted to penetrate much deeper into the social estate in order to represent in a much more diverse way the different lives there.

Since the end of the 1950s, French TV informed regularly through reports and debates about the (con)structural developments in the Paris Region. Within the coverage about the housing crisis, TV programmes were dedicated to the changed living conditions in newly built *grands ensembles*. The accusations in the TV and press were at times so passionate that the geographer Yves Lacoste questioned their appropriateness. Since the housing estates generally offered central heating, bathrooms and especially toilets, their new inhabitants encountered facilities which their former homes had often lacked.²⁰ Indeed, the interviewee statements were often subtler than those of the journalists, who usually spoke to women, children and teenagers as the biggest groups of inhabitants, staying at home during the day while the husbands and fathers still only found jobs in the centre or Paris. When journalists asked about the adaptation to the environment, people mostly remarked that this was only a temporal situation, as they were still aiming for a single-family home; this was proved repeatedly in statistics.²¹

On 16th March 1968, almost exactly one year after the release of *Deux ou trois choses*, the TV programme *Conseils utiles ou inutiles* (*Useful or Not Useful Suggestions*) within the series *La vie dans les grands ensembles* (*The Life in Housing Estates*) starts with a vertical panning that continues in a 360-degree pan shot (Fig. 3).²² The circular camera movement begins and ends with a frog's-eye view of a housing block. The visual dis-orientation introduces the topic of the episode: psychological problems and illnesses in *grands ensembles* were discussed with a psychiatrist and a general doctor. The conversation is introduced by the question: *Do inhabitants of grands ensembles suffer from a sort of psychological condition which is defined by the notion of 'housing estate illness'?*²³



Fig. 3. Stills from the TV programme *La vie dans les grands ensembles* (16.03.1968) © INA

The two experts talk about existing phenomena of isolation, anonymity and depression, but occasionally they weaken the explanation that the built environment could be the reason for the mental health problems. However, they agree on the fact that the new residents are obliged to adapt themselves to a completely new environment. In addition, they confirm the requirement of preventive measures against psychological problems and the support for inhabitants who suffer from mental illness, in order to treat individual cases on-site. Regarding risk groups, they mention especially housewives who stay all day at the

estate, who do their groceries and their cooking in less time; more leisure time entails the risk of a new emptiness and thus potential anxiety, which might not be simmered down with radio voices and images from outside²⁴ – the media that are obviously picked up in *Deux ou trois choses*.

The topic of mental illness generated by the living conditions was part of a controversial debate in the 1960s in the press, in specialist literature and on TV. The housing estate in Sarcelles (around 1954-74) became an *archetype of a dormitory town*,²⁵ giving name to a *media illness*,²⁶ “Sarcellite”, a type of neurosis. The TV programme *Forty Thousand Neighbours*²⁷ from 1960 with its study of Sarcelles identifies all those points of criticism that Raymond Kaës discussed three years later in his psychosociological study *Living in Grands Ensembles*²⁸: monotonous architecture, apartments too small, tenants’ financial problems, lacking intimacy due to poor sound insulation, promiscuity, youth crime, age average of 12 years, lacking public transport to get to Paris, no jobs. The latter problem induced in the already mentioned dormitory towns the early morning rush hours of mostly male commuters employed in Paris. Even though in the 1960 journalists conciliated critical comments by saying that Sarcelles would still develop, five years later the place was definitely labelled as a *pathogenic symbol of the housing estate*, and an *anti-model*.²⁹

Godard seems to have summarized the above list of shortcomings in a shot at the beginning of the film (Fig. 4). This scene in the apartment of Monsieur Gérard is, in fact, also characterised by a circular camera movement. The back and forth and the panning of the camera, positioned in the middle of the space, follows Mister Gérard’s and Juliette’s movements. Her daughter Solange is explicitly not framed, in fact the camera’s relation to the crying child is as passive as her mother’s, who only wants to hand over the girl as quickly as possible to this improvised nursery. Together with the activation of the apartment floor plan and the view outside the window, the pan shot represents also here the ambitious intention to incorporate within a ‘big shot’ the *grand ensemble* of different ways of making a living in a *grand ensemble*. Monsieur Gérard transformed his living room into a nursery, whereas the other two rooms serve as a sleazy hotel where prostitutes can service their customers. His salary is not in money but in consumer products, which he displays on a table – similar to the arrangement in the last shot of the film. This improvised shop suggests another source of earnings. A coloured poster of Nana from Godard’s *Vivre sa vie* (1962) stresses the fact that Gérard manages a brothel.³⁰ The white walls are also decorated with airline posters, advertising for travel destinations which express the wish for another world, exterior to the housing estate. The view outside the window shows a boulevards pitch encircled by fences, bushes and benches. The gaze has to remain within this highly structured area inside the block slabs. Any try to evade them, even only visually, is banned. In this presumed free space, Juliette can now be spotted. Apparently, she has left the apartment and the block while the camera finished its circular movement.

Raymond Kaës especially singled out female inhabitants in the conclusions of his book. While the sociologist Paul-Henry Chombart de Lauwe recognized in the newly built housing estates an *occasion for liberation and a true social revolution*,³¹ Kaës’s studies proved the risk of alienation by mothers and wives imprisoned at home.³² Kaës associated depression and the reduced agency of women with the built environment they lived in, whereas the sociologist Michèle Huguët analysed that the fears and identity issues were provoked by the experience of social density in housing estates. She argued that the reasons for neurosis were projected on the housing situation rather than on oneself.³³ In her later dissertation, Huguët reiterated that women appropriated the symptom of their resentment from the myth of the harmful *grands ensembles* produced by the media.³⁴ A subtler perspective was advocated by

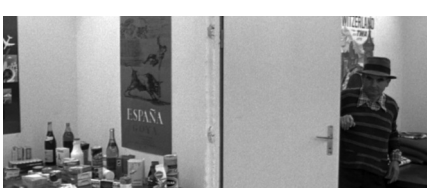


Fig. 4. 360-degree pan in the apartment of Monsieur Gérard

Georges Michel, who one month after the release of *Deux ou trois choses* published the results of an international study about mental health in *grands ensembles*. The article presented for the French case studies by Chombart de Lauwe, who appeared as an expert several times in French TV.³⁵ Michel stated: *Well, it appears that in the case of grands ensembles in the suburbs the overall view by the media is exaggerated; that if the suicides are controverted notably by the psychiatrists and have other causes than just the mere habitat in the social housing estates; that if the mental illness is not connected to this habitat, it is not less true that people there experience strong difficulties, accentuated by this form of habitat, and that these difficulties can create depressions. What the people suffer from, in the housing estates, after the change of environment, is not finding a social milieu.*³⁶ These few examples testify to the fact that the correlation between women's behaviour and *grand ensemble* was well noticed and discussed in contemporary sociology and media.

Godard incorporated this discourse and created towards the end of the film an emblematic cinematic form: as discussed before, it consists of the camera movement in a circle, initiated by Juliette, together with the camera position within the minimalist urban surrounding characterised by its grid pattern. This abstraction towards a precise circular panorama view happens also within the film: the visually and acoustically restless scene in the morning at Monsieur Gerard's, which interweaves different topics of the film, is followed by a purified scene in the exterior towards the end of the day and the film. This gesture stands for a reduced counterpart and finally a visual sign for the relation between Juliette and the *grand ensemble*. The 360-degree pan shot and its total view of the housing estate turns out to be the cinematic form appropriate for Godard's ambition to capture totally the *grand ensemble*, the 'big(er) picture', of living in contemporary France. In fact, the form of the panoramic gaze reflects Godard's aphorism or, according to Georges Didi-Huberman, slogan³⁷: *Le travelling est affaire de morale*³⁸ (*Tracking is a moral affair*). It calls for a responsible and careful perspective of the filmmaker in finding a dignified cinematic form for the chosen filmic content. This is on the one hand based on an *inner ethics of the proper form*.³⁹ On the other hand, within the chosen *décor*, the filmic techniques of framing and of (360-degree) panning are intertwined within the notion of *cadre* (frame) and especially within the *cadre de vie*, which was a current topic debated within the discourse of *grands ensembles* in France of the 1960s.

According to the French dictionary *Le Grand Robert*, *cadre* is a synonym of *décor*, the environment and milieu, thus a space or a scene(rie) or what it is surrounded by.⁴⁰ The scene in *Deux ou trois choses* is analogous to this: at the beginning, when the camera is not yet moving, Juliette is framed at the bottom of the image as if she would be part of the grid façade; see the adjective of *cadre* which is *carré*, deriving from the Latin *quadratum*. Juliette as a fictional inhabitant is part of the real *décor* – synonymous of milieu or *cadre* – and she represents, as we know, at the same time the metaphor of the Paris Region which is characterized through housing estates. The pan shot outside captures within the given frame, or *cadre*, the surrounding *décor*, and thus the milieu or habitat of the main character, whose condition and behaviour is influenced by this environment. The notion *cadre de vie* means the *environment, physical or human milieu in which we live*.⁴¹ In a metaphorical sense, it describes the constraints that Juliette experiences: (*Abstract*). *What limits, imposes a constraint*.⁴² The filmic mediation of these life circumstances is also formally given through the fixed dimensions of the *cadre*. More generally, *cadre de vie* also stands for the natural, political, economic and cultural structures or framework of a period; according to the dictionary: *Imposed structures by nature. The reality (for thinking), through the institutions (for society), etc. The social, psychological framework of memory. The framework for history, of time*.⁴³

Correspondingly, Pierre Sudreau, the minister of construction, claimed already in 1959 that architects and urbanists have to shape the *cadre de vie*. On the occasion of the 10th World

Urbanism Day, he also requested that this responsibility should be mediated at schools and on TV: *Architecture and Urbanism condition nevertheless the cadre de vie of our compatriots and, in consequence, their future, our future, the future of our children. This is why, in any measure, we have to react against this oblivion and, with your help, with the help of all those who, for years, have been fighting in favour of new ideas; let us realise together this effort for information.*⁴⁴ At the same time, he demanded a changed of perspective on the scale from single-family homes to territorial planning. The prioritisation of urbanism rather than architecture and all the other disciplines entered into the emphatic conclusion of his speech: *Urbanism, at the same time art and science, is the most beautiful of all activities. It is the highest of all human disciplines, the one that permits human beings to finally realise their ancient dream of mastering time and space.*⁴⁵

The notions of “milieu” and “habitat”, which have been theorised in geography already in the 19th century, characterised the post-war architectural discourse, especially in the frame of *Congrès Internationaux de l'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM), and since 1953 through Team 10 and its French representatives George Candilis, Alexis Josic and Shadrach Woods.⁴⁶ In the preparation meeting for the 9th CIAM conference in 1952, Georges Candilis defined the “habitat” as emerging from specific practices within spatial scales.⁴⁷ Similarly, Alison and Peter Smithson presented at the 9th CIAM congress in 1953 the *Urban Re-Identification Grid*. Its focus on relationships within the spatial and social scales of *House, Street, District and City* was opposed to the four functions of *Dwelling, Work, Recreation and Transportation* defined by the *Charter of Athens* in 1933. In fact, Team 10 was concerned with issues of ethics and aesthetics as it has been described by Reyner Banham.⁴⁸

The Parisian architectural studio Candilis-Josic-Woods identified the confrontation with the mass as one of the essential phenomena of modern architecture. Therefore, the office decidedly designed and built for *le plus grand nombre*, “the biggest number”.⁴⁹ Their concept of habitat demonstrated a critique against the thoughtless standardisation in housing and in the process of suburbanisation. However, it should not be seen as opposing these changes, but rather as an attempt to rethink them within the more general design of the built environment starting with the dwelling: *From this perspective Habitat for the Greatest Number appears as a plea to situate concerns of human dwelling at the centre of the ongoing modernisation of the environment in the post-war period.*⁵⁰ Later, Josic phrased the transition into new scales as follows: *Organising the life of the greatest number is a fundamental problem of contemporary civilisations. The breaking off with traditions, the change of relationships and behaviours, pushes the world towards an inevitable reorientation of scale. Human scale? No, scale of many humans! The great number is the dimension of reference of our contemporary world. The progressive growth of populations, the reduction of required space for the life of humans, provoke concerns in humanity. ... People have constituted a cadre de vie by building the city. It is within this framework [cadre] that they evolve, in space and time, and carry out all activities from birth to death.*⁵¹

Candilis-Josic-Woods recognised the knowledge about architecture in the inhabitants themselves and their everyday living habits. This is why Tom Avermaete called the architects *epistemologists of the everyday*.⁵² In mass production, as the basic element of mass culture and also of their projects, they did not necessarily see a devaluation of architecture, as had already been proven Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Jean Prouvé: *The Greatest Number was not considered a problematic given, but rather an opportunity to reconsider the very essence of architecture and urbanism.*⁵³ In a TV programme broadcasted in June 1966, which, among other topics, also thematised the Cité du Mirail project by Candilis-Josic-Woods, Candilis decidedly commented on the professional and ethical claim that *architecture and urbanism become one thing, become an entity and not two separated things, as it was unfortunately treated up till now.*⁵⁴

Equally, the 9th conference of the *Union Internationale des Architectes* in 1967 was dedicated to *L'architecture et le milieu humain* (The architecture and the human milieu). After the UIA colloquium in 1966 already marked a turning point within the internal *Commission de l'Habitat*,⁵⁵ the *Colloque sur l'habitat* (Colloquium on Habitat) took place in 1968. The UIA journal issue published for example Paul-Henry Chombard de Lauwe's article "Participation of the inhabitant in the elaboration of her/his habitation".⁵⁶ The Parisian architect, urbanist and engineer Henri-Jean Calsat stressed the social responsibility of architects by using the notions of *cadre de vie*, *milieu*, *environnement*, *habitation* and *habitude* (habit): *Technical thinking leads to the consideration of the city as an object. Considering the city as a subject, this is the level of investigation and the sense that we suggest for the environment. Also, research about the environment follows the objective of "a milieu adapted for human beings, rather than human beings adapted to the milieu". ... The physical aspect of a city has perhaps an impact power that conditions the life of the inhabitants. ... In conclusion, by helping the human to liberate herself/himself of what is often only a habit, lack of reflection, by permitting the architect to conceive a cadre de vie better adapted to the new aspirations, a better adaptation of habitation on the site is the result.*⁵⁷

The protests of 1968 put an end to the *Beaux Arts* tradition in French architectural education.⁵⁸ Also the focus of architectural production changed; from quantity through state planning since the post-war period, the focus was shifted towards quality by shaping the environment.⁵⁹ In this development new schools and collaborations with universities played an important role.⁶⁰ Especially the *Institut de l'environnement*, which belonged to the Ministry of Culture and existed between 1968 and 1971, introduced a paradigm shift in French architectural education. According to its comprehensive orientation towards the *Aménagement de l'environnement* (Planning of the Environment) it offered their 'interns' from all the relevant disciplines an introduction into pedagogy and research, in order to prepare them for teaching at the architectural and art schools that were newly established in this period.⁶¹ The seminar *Cadre de vie* resulted in a collection of essays on topics like ecology, mass media, conceptual art, fashion and plastic. Christian Gaillard defined in his text "Collective psychology and environmental design" the concepts of *environnement* and *cadre de vie* as an ensemble that is at the same time made by human beings and conditions them.⁶²

Parallel to these new, interdisciplinary perspectives in architectural education at the interface of scientific analysis and design, the fast process of degradation of *grands ensembles* had begun. This problem not only concerned the building structures but also their reputation, due to negative news in the media.

On 6th March 1971 *Le drame de la Courneuve*⁶³ was broadcasted in the news on French TV: the owner of a café in the Cité des 4000 Sud shot a teenager because he felt disturbed. In the manner of an establishing shot, the TV camera approaches the place by using close-ups and zooms. Pan shots capture housing blocks, the shopping arcade and a police car. A crowd of people gather around the journalist and the camera. A witness says that the reaction by the coffee shop owner was normal, while another answers "ah, yes, yes, yes" when asked whether such an incident could happen again. What impresses visually in this reportage is what happens after a cut (Fig. 5): the camera is positioned between housing blocks on an empty street and starts to turn on its own axis, first slowly and then faster and faster. An uncanny glockenspiel defines somewhat the rhythm of this dizzying 360-degree pan shot. This camera out of control reminds of the unchained camera technique of the 1920s, which allowed to demonstrate the human excessive demands in confrontation with the urban environment.

Here, the audio-visually effective shot within the *grand ensemble décor* demonstrates symbolically the real hopelessness of the social housing estate inhabitants, whose displeasure



Fig. 5. 360-degree pan in the TV report *Le drame de La Courneuve* (6.03.1971) © INA

was paired with grim resignation. The next sequence leads into a dark interior of an apartment, where a father complains that the surrounding lacks any infrastructure and that if the wife and mother also works, there is nothing to eat. This statement is followed by various views of housing estates accompanied by melancholic piano sounds. Finally, the word is given to Georges Candilis, the former prominent exponent of mass housing. He now confesses that modern architecture has failed in building humane housing: *I am a professional, I am an architect. I have participated in this enormous realisation in the last 25 years. We build dwellings, we do a social act, this is very good. But we needed hundreds of thousands to understand that this is a crime. Because it is not only about housing human beings, but giving them their dignity.*⁶⁴

Almost four years after Godard's 360-degree pan shot in the Cité des 4000 Sud for *Deux ou trois choses*, this housing estate was at the centre of French news.⁶⁵ In the meantime, the estate had obviously deteriorated drastically and had become a negative model for the shortcomings of *grands ensembles*. It is a striking fact that also this report about a severe incident at the same location used a 360-degree pan shot to present the inhuman situation in housing estates through images and statements. We do not know and it does not matter whether the journalists knew Godard's film. The director himself had already stressed during the making of his work that he wished to produce *Actualités*, i.e. newsreels. Once again, it becomes obvious that in the mediation of *grands ensembles* – as built forms and problem zones due to the poor *cadre de vie* – the frame was not enough for a total view, a long shot or *plan d'ensemble* in film vocabulary. The moving 360-degree pan shot offers a unique spatial impression of those housing estates that people who did not live there often only knew from mostly negative media coverage. Further, the accelerated circling movement could mediate both: the feeling of imprisonment in the orthogonal structures and that of exclusion from a dignified and human *cadre de vie*.

¹ 'Décor' is the French term for film decor but also for the everyday (built) environment. See "Décor", in: *Le grand Robert de la langue française*, ed. A. Rey, vol. 2., Dictionnaire Le Robert, 1996 (1992), pp. 1067-1068; DÉCOR, in: *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*, 9th ed., vol. 1, 2005, p. 1265; <http://www.cnrtl.fr/etymologie/d%C3%A9cor/substantif> (accessed: 7.12.2019).

² J. Collet, M. Delahaye, J.-A. Fieschi, J.-L. Godard, B. Tavernier, "Entretien: Les Cahiers

rencontrent Godard après ses quatre premiers films", *Cahiers du cinéma* Dec. 1962, no. 138, p. 26. All translations in this article are by the author.

³ G. Candilis, "Housing, the Heart of the Problem" [English Summary], *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* March 1967, vol. 38, no. 130, p. CXII.

⁴ Antoine de Baecque uses this category of 'film enquête' ('enquiry film' or 'research film') for *Une femme mariée* (1964) and *Mas-*

- culin Féminin* (1965). A. de Baecque, *Godard, biographie*, Grasset, Paris 2010, p. 315.
- ⁵ J.-L. Godard, "La vie moderne", *Le Nouvel Observateur* 18.10.1996, no. 100, p. 54.
- ⁶ Especially in French historiography there has been a huge amount of research in (social) housing estates and new towns in the past years, see especially publications by Annie Fourcaut and Loïc Vadelorge. For a concise English contribution, see K. Cupers, *The Social project: Housing postwar France*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2014.
- ⁷ R. Buchard, *Zoom*, ORTF, 25.10.1966.
- ⁸ A. de Baecque, "Quand on soulève les jupes de la ville, on en voit le sexe", in: *Godard, biographie*, Grasset, Paris 2010, pp. 334-344; A. Bergala, "Le Paris de Jean-Luc Godard", 2016, *Forum des images. Paris Cinéma Région*, <http://www.pariscinemaregion.fr/fiches/le-paris-de-jean-luc-godard/> (accessed: 23.03.2020); idem, "Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle, 1966", in: *Godard au travail: les années 60*, Éditions Cahiers du Cinéma, Paris 2006, pp. 322-341; idem, "Jean-Luc Godard (1930)", in: *La ville au cinéma: encyclopédie*, eds. T. Jousse, T. Paquot, Éditions Cahiers du Cinéma, Paris 2005, pp. 710-716; idem, *Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle, ou philosophie de la sensation*, Argos Films, Paris 2004; A. Cardin, "Les 4000 logements de La Courneuve, Réalités et imaginaires cinématographiques", *Revue d'histoire critique* 2006, no. 98, <http://journals.openedition.org/chrhc/864> (accessed: 12.03.2020); E. Charbit, "Aliénation des constructions", *Vertigo* 2001, no. 21, pp. 145-148; D. Faroult, "Déplacer le cinéma? (1966)", in: *Godard, Inventions d'un cinéma politique*, Les prairies ordinaires, Paris 2018, pp. 69-91; A. Guzzetti, *Two or Three Things I Know about Her: Analysis of a Film by Godard*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1981; F. Penz, "Architecture and the screen from photography to synthetic imaging. Capturing and building space, time and motion", in: *Architectures of Illusion. From motion pictures to navigable interactive environments*, eds. M. Thomas, F. Penz, Intellect, Bristol 2003, pp. 135-164; K. Shonfield, "Free circulation = free copulation: women and roads in *Nana* and *Two or Three Things I Know About Her*", in: *Walls have feelings. Architecture, film, and the city*, Routledge, London – New York 2000, pp. 111-129; D. Smith, "Paris plays itself: Widescreen and the city", *Architecture and Culture* 1.03.2015, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 17-32; M. Taunton, "Delouvrier, de Gaulle and Godard", in: *Fictions of the city: Class, culture and mass housing in London and Paris*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2009, pp. 183-195; J. Van Waerbeke, "Paysage et politique dans les banlieues cinématographiques", in: *Paysages politiques*, ed. I. Trivisani-Moreau, Presses universitaires de Rennes, Rennes 2011, pp. 183-195.
- ⁹ A. Bazin, "Peinture et cinéma", in: idem, *Qu'est-ce qu'est le cinéma*, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1975, pp. 187-192; idem, "Théâtre et cinéma" [1951], in: idem, *Qu'est-ce qu'est le cinéma*, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1975, pp. 129-178.
- ¹⁰ V. Pantenburg, "Kameraschwenk. Stil – Operation – Geste?", in: *Filmstil, Perspektivierungen eines Begriffs*, eds. J. Blunk, T. Kaiser, D. Kammerer, C. Wahl, Edition Text & Kritik, München 2016, p. 241.
- ¹¹ Ibidem, pp. 246-251. Apart from the observation of urban and domestic space, 360-degree pans also emerged in *Land Art* around 1970. E. Ehninger, "360°, Landschaftsprojektionen und ihr bildkritisches Potenzial", in: *Bildprojektionen, Filmisch-fotografische Dispositive in Kunst und Architektur*, eds. L. Haberer, A. Urban, Transcript, Bielefeld 2016, pp. 285-302.
- ¹² V. Pantenburg, op. cit., p. 241.
- ¹³ See for example R. W. Gaston, "Decorum", in: *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. J. Turner, Macmillan – Grove, London – New York 1996, pp. 612-614.
- ¹⁴ See A. Émile, "Les dangers de la prefabrication", *Techniques et architecture* Sept. 1968, no. 5, p. 74.
- ¹⁵ Jean André Fieschi already described the visually mediated imprisonment of the prostitute Nana in Godard's *Vivre sa vie* (1962). See J.-A. Fieschi, "La difficulté d'être Jean-Luc Godard", *Cahiers du cinéma* Nov. 1962, no. 137, p. 24.
- ¹⁶ M. Foucault, "Panoptisme", in: *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*, Gallimard, Paris 1975, pp. 197-229. See also V. Pantenburg, "Back and Forth. Anmerkungen zum horizontalen Kameraschwenk", in: *BildBewegungen*, eds. P. Rathgeber, N. Steinmüller, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, München 2013, p. 162.
- ¹⁷ Two shots before, a close-up of a panel with the inscription 'en vent ici' ('on sale here') suggests through editing that the two girls might be prostitutes.
- ¹⁸ A. Bergala, "Deux ou trois choses que je sais d'elle, 1966", op. cit., p. 332.
- ¹⁹ See C. Vimenet, "Les 'étoiles filantes'", *Le Nouvel Observateur* 23.03.1966, no. 71, pp. 18-19.

- ²⁰ Y. Lacoste, "Un problème complexe et débattu: les grands ensembles", *Bulletin de l'association de géographes français* Dec. 1963, no. 318-319, p. 37.
- ²¹ See for example R. Kaës, *Vivre dans les grands ensembles*, Les éditions ouvrières, Paris 1963.
- ²² J. Locquin, *La vie dans les grands ensembles* (Conseils utiles ou inutiles), ORTE, 16.03.1968.
- ²³ *Ibidem*.
- ²⁴ *Ibidem*.
- ²⁵ C. Canteux, *Filmer les grands ensembles, Villes rêvées, villes introuvables, Une histoire des représentations audiovisuelles des grands ensembles (milieu des années 1930 – début des années 1980)*, Créaphis Editions, Paris 2014, p. 216.
- ²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 220.
- ²⁷ J. Krier, P. Tchernia, *Sarcelles, Quarante mille voisins* (Cinq colonnes à la une), ORTE, Dec. 1960.
- ²⁸ R. Kaës, op. cit.
- ²⁹ C. Canteux, op. cit., p. 220.
- ³⁰ Nana and Juliette serve their customers in sleazy hotels. In 1946 brothels were forbidden in France by the Loi Marthe Richard. See D. Faroult, op. cit., p. 87.
- ³¹ P.-H. Chombart de Lauwe, "Préface", in: R. Kaës, op. cit., p. 9.
- ³² R. Kaës, op. cit., pp. 206-207.
- ³³ See M. Huguet, "Les femmes dans les grands ensembles", *Revue française de sociologie* 1965, vol. VI, no. 2, p. 226.
- ³⁴ M. Huguet, *Les femmes dans les grands ensembles. De la relation entre une réalité concrète et sa mythologie*, Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris 1971, pp. 237-238.
- ³⁵ See for example J. Lallier, *Bâtir pour les hommes*, ORTE, 24.10.1963.
- ³⁶ G. Michel, "Recherches sur la santé mentale dans les 'Grands ensembles'", *La vie urbaine: Urbanisme, habitation, aménagement du territoire* April 1967, p. 150.
- ³⁷ G. Didi-Huberman, *Passées citées par JLG*, Les éditions de minuit, Paris 2015, p. 92.
- ³⁸ Godard mentioned this phrase during a conversation about Alain Renais' film *Hiroshima mon amour* (1958), because he believed that the film was in terms of its topic over-esthetised. See J. Domarchi, J. Doniol-Valcrose, J.-L. Godard, P. Kast, J. Rivette, E. Rohmer, "Hiroshima notre amour", *Cahiers du cinéma* July 1959, no. 97, p. 5. In fact, Godard's phrase was an adaption of Luc Moullet's *Moral is an affair of tracking* (*La morale est affaire de travellings*) which he introduced in an article published in the same journal only a few months before. L. Moullet, "Sam Fuller", *Cahiers du cinéma* March 1959, no. 93, p. 14. Godard's way of quoting has always been characterised by transformations of the original statement. See G. Didi-Huberman, op. cit., p. 14.
- ³⁹ A. de Baecque, *La cinéphilie: Invention d'un regard, histoire d'une culture*, Hachette Littératures, Paris 2005, p. 198. See also J.-M. Pottier, 'Le travelling de Kapo': *Comment Rivette nous a fait réfléchir sur la Shoah au cinéma*, „Slate.fr" 29.01.2016. <http://www.slate.fr/story/113377/travelling-kapo-rivette-shoah> (accessed: 12.03.2020); J. Rivette, *De l'abjection*, *Cahiers du cinéma* June 1961, no. 120, pp. 54-55; A. de Baecque, "Le cas Kapo. De l'abjection, ou comment Jacques Rivette forge une morale de la représentation des camps de la mort", *Revue d'Histoire de la Shoah* February 2011, no. 195, pp. 211-238, <https://www.cairn.info/revue-revue-d-histoire-de-la-shoah-2011-2-page-211.htm> (accessed: 13.12.2019).
- ⁴⁰ *Le grand Robert de la langue française*, op. cit., p. 260.
- ⁴¹ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴² *Ibidem*.
- ⁴³ *Ibidem*.
- ⁴⁴ See P. Soudreau, "Jour mondial de l'urbanisme 1959: déclaration de Pierre Sudreau, ministre de la construction", *Urbanisme* 1960, no. 66, p. 4.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 5.
- ⁴⁶ See T. Avermaete, "Habitat for the greatest number", in: idem, *Another modern. The post-war architecture and urbanism of Candilis-Josic-Woods*, NAI, Rotterdam 2005, pp. 109-195.
- ⁴⁷ See idem, "The concept of habitat", in: idem, *Another modern...* op. cit., pp. 139-142. For CIAM and Team 10, see *ibidem*; E. P. Mumford, *The CIAM discourse on urbanism, 1928-1960*, MIT Press, Cambridge 2000; A. Pedret, *Team 10: An archival history*, Routledge – Taylor & Francis Group, London – New York 2013; *Team 10, 1953-81. In search of a utopia of the present – Exhibition catalogue – Netherlands architecture institute*, Rotterdam, 24.09.2005-08.01.2006, eds. M. Risselada, D. van den Heuvel, NAI, Rotterdam 2005.
- ⁴⁸ R. Banham, *The New Brutalism, ethic or aesthetic?*, The Architectural Press, London 1966.
- ⁴⁹ T. Avermaete, *Masses as subject*, in: idem, *Another modern...* op. cit., pp. 119-122. This 'building for the masses' is best represented by the *grand ensemble* Le Mirail (1962-1977) in Toulouse.

- ⁵⁰ T. Avermaete, *The Re-introduction of an ethical perspective*, in: idem, *Another modern...* op. cit., p. 195.
- ⁵¹ A. Josic, "Doctrines & incertitudes", *Les cahiers de la recherche architecturale* Jan. 1980, no. 6-7, pp. 39-40.
- ⁵² See T. Avermaete, *Epistemologists of the everyday*, in: idem, *Another modern...* op. cit., pp. 57-197.
- ⁵³ Idem, *Architecture and mass culture*, in: idem, *Another modern...* op. cit., p. 123.
- ⁵⁴ Georges Candilis' statement in the TV programme by Jean Balladour, Claude Dagues, *Ça ou rien, l'architecture contemporaine* (Architecture de notre temps), ORTF, 17.06.1966.
- ⁵⁵ P. Vago, "Introduction", *UIA* July 1968, no. 50, p. 3. See also *UIA* October 1966, no. 41.
- ⁵⁶ P.-H. Chombart de Lauwe, "Participation de l'habitant à l'élaboration de son habitation", *UIA* July 1968, no. 50, pp. 14-17.
- ⁵⁷ J. H. Calsat, "Adaptation de l'habitat au site", *UIA* July 1968, no. 50, p. 8.
- ⁵⁸ *Mai 68: L'architecture aussi! Exhibition catalogue – Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine*, 16.05.-17.09.1968, eds. C. Maniaque Benton, É. Marantz, J.-L. Violeau, Éditions B2 – Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine, Paris 2018, p. 7.
- ⁵⁹ See the argument of the geographer Christine Tobelem-Zanin, who describes the development from quantitative politics to research aiming for a more qualitative urban politics: C. Tobelem-Zanin, "L'émergence du concept de qualité de la vie et sa réalité politique", in: *La qualité de la vie dans les villes françaises*, ed. C. Tobelem-Zanin, Publications de l'Université de Rouen, Rouen 1995, pp. 11-82.
- ⁶⁰ See *Architectures manifestes: Les écoles d'architecture en France depuis 1950*, eds. G. Lambert, É. Marantz, MétisPresses, Genève 2018; *Les années 68 et la formation des architectes*, ed. C. Maniaque Benton, Éditions Point de Vues, Rouen 2018; *Mai 68: L'architecture aussi!* op. cit., p. 38.
- ⁶¹ The difficulties and discrepancies regarding the implementation of the new pedagogical concepts finally led to an early dissolution of the institute. See M. Frochoux, "L'Institut de l'Environnement, 1969-1971: une pédagogie expérimentale", in: *Les années 68 et la formation des architectes*, op. cit., pp. 170-181. See also T. Côme, *L'Institut de l'environnement: une école décrochée: urbanisme, architecture, design, communication*, Éditions B42, Paris 2017, p. 17; T. Côme, "L'institut de l'environnement, 1969-1971: le rêve d'une architecture pédagogique décrochée", in: *Architectures manifestes*, op. cit., pp. 165-178.
- ⁶² C. Gaillard, "Psychologie collective et environmental design", in: *Institut de l'environnement, Séminaire Cadre de vie [1972]*, ed. Institut de l'environnement, Paris 1973.
- ⁶³ *Le drame de la Courneuve* (JT nuit), ORTF, 6.03.1971.
- ⁶⁴ Georges Candilis' statement in the TV news report *Le drame de la Courneuve* (JT nuit), ORTF, 6.03.1971.
- ⁶⁵ Since the 1980s, the Cité des 4000 in La Courneuve has been one of the most media-tised *grands ensembles* in France. See C. Bachmann, L. Basier, *Mise en images d'une banlieue ordinaire: stigmatisations urbaines et stratégies de communication*, Syros-Alternatives, Paris 1989.

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Słowa kluczowe:

Jean-Luc Godard;
kino francuskie;
osiedle
mieszkaniowe;
architektura;
Cité des 4000 Sud;
ujęcie
panoramyczne

Abstrakt

Jacqueline Maurer

Cadre de vie. Film Dwie lub trzy rzeczy, które o niej wiem (1967)

Jean-Luca Godarda, francuska telewizja i dyskurs architektoniczny

Autorka demonstruje, w jaki sposób reżyser wpisał się swą produkcją we współczesny dyskurs krytyczny na temat społecznego projektu wielkich zespołów mieszkaniowych (*grands ensembles*). Godard chciał pokazać ów wielki zespół, a zarazem wielki/większy obraz tego, jak wygląda życie we współczesnej, konsumpcyjnie nastawionej Francji. Główna bohaterka Juliette Johnson jest przykładem statystycznej francuskiej obywatelki, a jednocześnie metaforą paryskiej aglomeracji, która przeszła ogromną transformację. Autorka koncentruje swą uwagę na zastosowanym w filmie 360-stopniowym ujęciu panoramującym, a także odnosi się do pojęcia kadru (*cadre*), co w efekcie pozwala jej połączyć teorię filmu ze współczesnym dyskursem na temat tego, jak ukształtowanie miejskiej zabudowy (*décor*) wpływa na jakość i warunki życia (*cadre de vie*). Analiza dwóch sekwencji tego filmu oraz historyczna kontekstualizacja dyskursów architektonicznych i teorii została w artykule uzupełniona porównaniem z dokumentalnymi programami telewizyjnymi. To właśnie te audycje swego czasu podsyły dyskusję na temat budownictwa komunalnego, ale ich twórcy zdjęcia panoramiczne zastosowali dopiero po premierze *Dwóch lub trzech rzeczy*...