In the footsteps of Jean Gottmann: From Le Havre to harbors between globalization and the quest for identity

"The case is clear: geographers need to rehabilitate the notion of territory and more precisely the notion of infra-national territory as a counterpoint to globalization. Man wants to be someone but come from somewhere. Spinoza, according to Jacques Lévy, tells us that man has a 'natural need for civil status' which is linked to the feeling of being active within a close-knit community."

François Gay

The author has had a double role as professor (regional and urban geography) and as a specialist of problems of town planning. He was influenced by the thinking of Jean Gottmann. As a teacher he taught first history at Lycée François 1er in Havre (1946-1962), then as professor of Geography in the University of Rouen and visiting professor in various US Universities: Southern Illinois, Arizona State, etc. He has published articles or books on Normandy, Benelux, Italy and the United States. He directed the review Etudes Normandes (1974-2003) and was researcher or consultant on various committees of town planning (Basse Seine, Rouen, Ville Nouvelle-Val de Reuil).

Introduction

As an introduction to this article entitled "In the footsteps of Jean Gottmann," I would like to briefly conjure up some personal memories. I hope they will shed light on the great personality of this master and friend since 1946. They also explain my choice of subject for this discussion on globalization, cultural identity and local development, paying special attention to Le Havre and to its estuary which I had the opportunity, long ago and on numerous occasions, to help Jean Gottmann get to know.

Jean Gottmann and Le Havre

I came to know Jean Gottmann on a personal level because of my links with Le Havre, in a time (long past) when Jean Gottmann used to go, as he called it, "on his transatlantic transhumances" which were then under the control of the TRANSAT liners between Le Havre and New York. This was the period between 1946 and 1955 (figs. 1 and 2).

Then a teacher at the Lycée François 1er, I had sent a letter to Jean Gottmann, courtesy of Armand Colin Publishers, to praise his two articles published in *Annales de géographie* and in *Annales ESC,* particularly MER ET TERRE *esquisse de*

géographie politique en 1947 and which had appeared to me as two tokens of the strong renewal of French geography in the immediate post-war era. I discovered much later that geographers as varied as P. Pinchemel, J. Bastié and others had had the same reaction.

Jean Gottmann replied immediately in his elegant style and said "I'm taking the boat from Le Havre to the United States: we must meet." And so we did. Many circumstances made it possible for us to meet on numerous other occasions subsequently, particularly through my father, then an officer on the "Liberté," who looked after the geographer during his many trips on the French Line.

At my request, Jean Gottmann gave several talks at the Chamber of Commerce of l'Ecole Supérieur de Commerce in Le Havre where I also used to teach. As time went on, Jean Gottmann wrote many articles for a new review on maritime economy published in Le Havre and called *La revue de la Porte Océane.* I was involved in the editorial side of the review, along with A. Vigarié who was, on an intellectual level, one of its main driving forces (fig. 3).

It was in this pioneering review, whose originality lay in its field of studies, namely maritime economy and port ecology as well as in his conferences that he experimented with many of his ideas on the relationship between cities and harbors, a theme which is today prevalent among geographers and planners. Proof of this is the Association Internationale Villes-Ports which is currently based in Le Havre (GOTTMANN, 1948, pp. 11-16), The same applies to the megalopolitan phenomenon which he used to describe as a "key region" in the North East of the USA (GOTTMANN, 1951, pp. 9-14 and 11-20) (figs. 3 and 4).

I think Gottmann really liked the city and the harbor of Le Havre, "Porte Océane," gateway to America. It was there that he could satisfy his taste for the open sea, an opening onto the world which would be one of the main features of his vast knowledge.

Because of its unique cosmopolitan character, Le Havre brought him in contact with an entire tradition of which he felt he was somewhat the inheritor. This tradition was personified by two prominent figures from Normandy, both of whom influ-
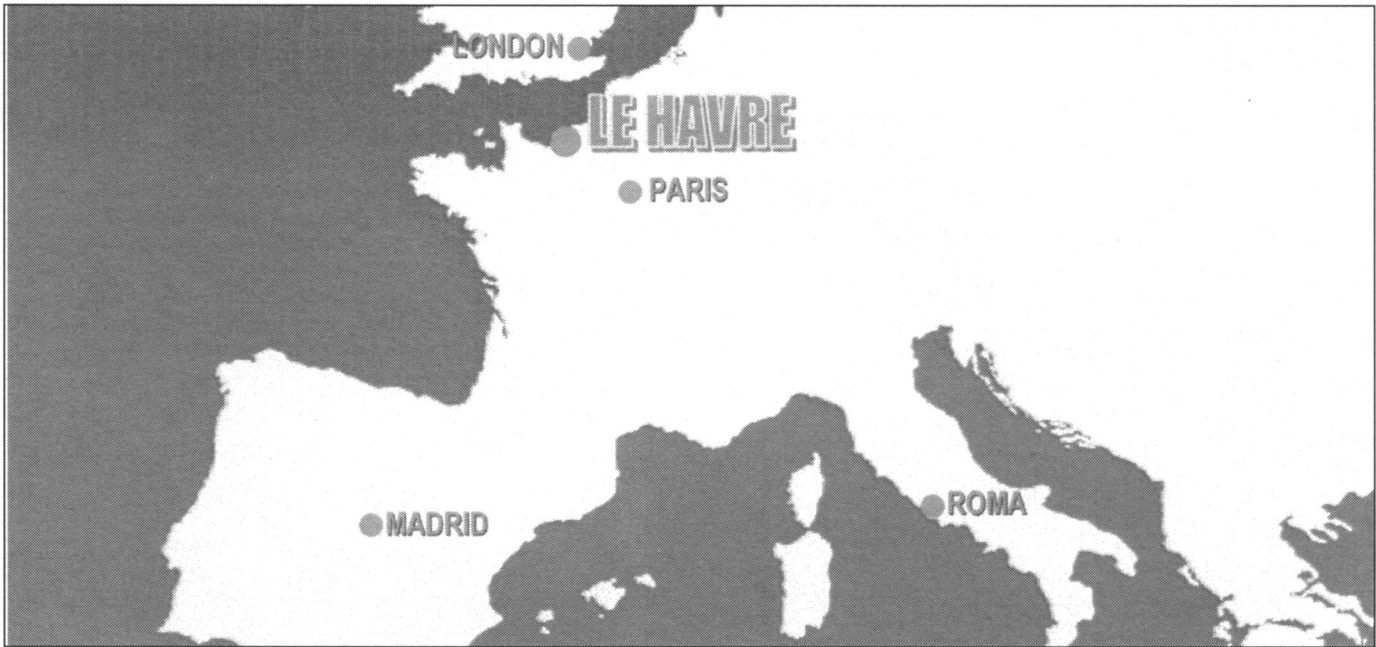
Fig. 1: Location of Le Havre in Europe.

Fig. 2: Le Havre – City core in construction in 1958 or 1959.

Fig. 3: Cover of *Revue de "La Porte Océane,"* 7th year – no. 71, March 1951, containing in the section "Mer et Terre" an article by Jean Gottmann on "La région charnière de l'économie américaine" (see also fig. 2).

La région charnière de l'économie américaine

Jean GOTTMANN

L a côte nord-est atlantique des Etats-Unis est le siège d'un phénomène extraordinaire d'occupation du sol. L'Européen qui parcourt pour la première fois la route qui de Boston mène à Washington est frappé tout d'abord par la densité des grandes villes. Lorsqu'il y regarde de plus près, il s'aperçoit que rieuse d'aspects, de spécialisations, de législations et même de climats, ce n'est plus guère une ville; il y a là une région urbaine, un type nouveau et pour l'instant unique d'agglomération. Comment ce phénomène s'est-il formé ? quelles formes nouvelles d'agglomération, d'habitat, de
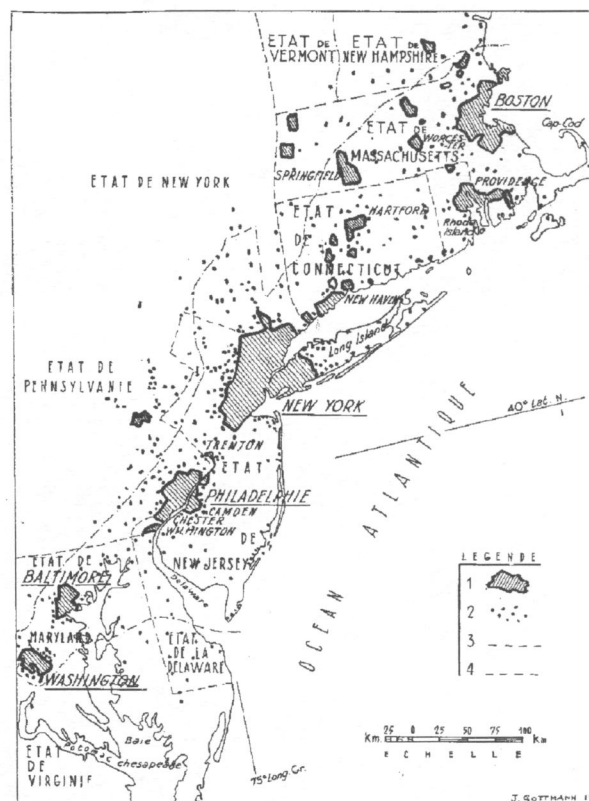
CROQUIS DE LA RÉGION CHARNIÈRE

Fig. 4: The beginning of the article by Jean Gottmann on "La région charnière de l'économie américaine" and a page-size map entitled "Croquis de la région charnière" and signed (bottom right) "J. Gottmann 1951" (*Source: Revue de "La Porte Océane,"* March 1951).

enced him greatly: A. de Tocqueville and A. Siegfried. Gottmann had indeed collaborated for a while with the latter, as he recalls in his contribution to our special edition of *Etudes Normandes*, dedicated to this geographer from Le Havre (*Etudes Normandes*, 1989, no. 2).

For Gottmann, Le Havre represented contact with big international trade, which he subsequently analyzed with great foresight in his book *Marchés de matières premières* (GOTTMANN, 1957). He was curious about everything: I can still see him jotting down the results of his observations in his small "omo-ring" notebooks during the meetings I organized for him, when he would write down an idea or a piece of information which he was so clever at incorporating into his lec-

tures, which always contained a wealth of information gleaned from his own experience.

In Le Havre, he was at the crossroads of some of the major themes that constituted his work, which we often discussed either in Normandy (fig. 5), in Oxford (figs. 6 and 7) or in the United States. Thus, we talked about the geography of harbors, incorporating the very complex notion of "gateway." He had indeed for several years been leading the Commission of Harbours of the International Geographic Union. National planning/planned development was also one of his concerns, as illustrated in the work he published in 1952 at Armand Colin on the subject of *Land Use Planning: Regional Planning and Geography.* Moreover, he encouraged me to give my first talk
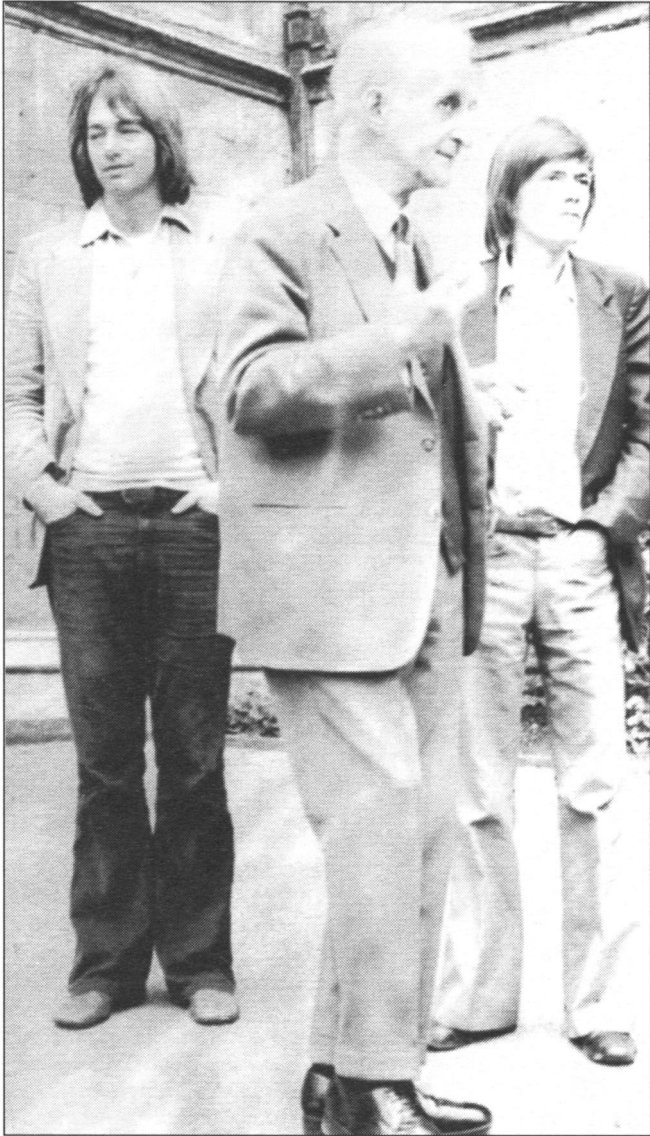
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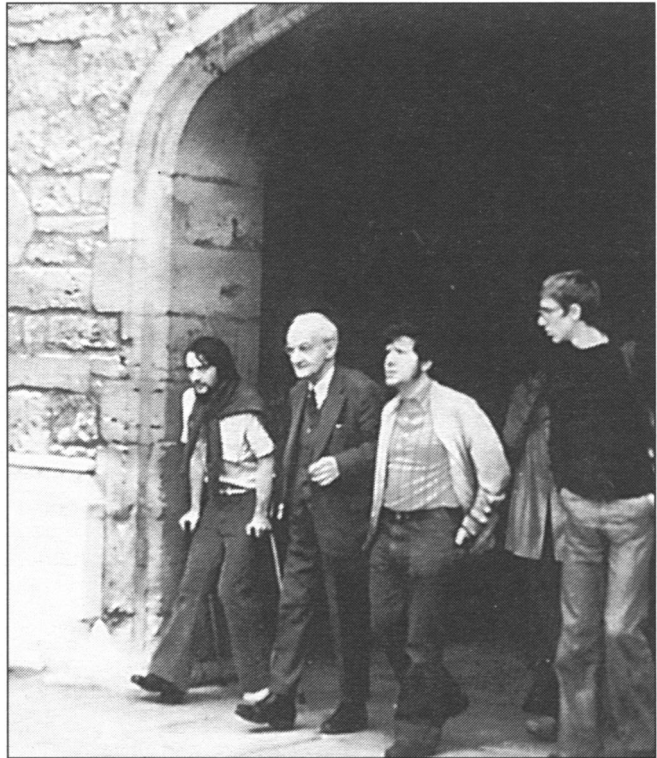
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Fig. 5: Jean Gottmann with the author's students in Rouen, June 1976.

Figs. 6 and 7: Jean Gottmann with François Gay's students on a visit to Hertford College, Oxford.

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on this theme at the IGU congress in Washington in 1952. Finally, he found in Le Havre an interesting starting point for analyzing the urban phenomenon in a city which is three times "born": at its creation in 1517 by King François 1er, following a sudden expansion at the end of the 19th century and, above all, because of the reconstruction that took place after the *tabula rasa* of 1944.

It was indeed in this city, as early as 1946, that a series of research seminars and thought processes began in areas close to those broached in this symposium. They began by exploring a theme that Jean Gottmann would later refine with the notion of "iconography." Thus, in 1946, on the initiative of the Institut Havrais de Psychologie des Peuples, a journal was published which dealt with this particular field of study and which incorporated the stereotypes and images of peoples. Jean Gottmann wrote a report of this journal in the prestigious American periodical *Geographical Review* (GOTTMANN, 1948b).

Not long afterwards, within the same intellectual circle, the *Cahiers de Sociologie Economique* were launched, again in Le Havre. They specialized in areas largely inspired by Jean Gottmann's thinking and have been mentioned earlier: harbors and harbor ecology, on the initiative of A. Vigarié; forms of new urbanization; unequal development.[1]

Finally, amongst all the theories that could so easily be applied to a harbor city such as Le Havre, there was an exploration of the concept of territory, the originality of which A.L. Sanguin demonstrated better than anybody else in his book *La géographie française à l'époque classique,* and which resulted in Gottmann's important work *The Significance of Territory* (GOTTMANN, 1973) following his remarkable portrayal of *Virginia at Mid-century* (published by Henry Holt in 1955).

Harbors between globalization and the quest for identity

The contradiction between the unique nature of territory ("Platonist isolationism") and globalization ("Alexandrine cosmopolitism") was a recurring theme in our conversations (GAY, 1994a). He felt strongly in his own life the tension between universalism and the quest for cultural identity.

A great traveller himself, he was a citizen of the world, straddling two continents, increasingly fascinated, towards the end of his life, by the Far East. But he was also very interested in his own cultural roots, steeped in a great Greco-Latin culture. People around him knew how important his regular trips to Athens (with Doxiadis), Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Haifa were to him.

Thus, Jean Gottmann was a pioneer in analyzing the tension between the global and the local, between networks and territories, between the need for roots and the desire to cross over borders. Harbor cities, because they were immersed in the global economy and because of the strong roots of their leader groups, were privileged grounds for studying these notions further.

Using Le Havre as an example of a modest harbor city on a world scale but a significant one in terms of the aforementioned tension, we used to discuss these various themes, and I now set out to explore their geographical impact. Even though he explores the divisions which are *internal* to territory in greater details in his other works, Jean Gottmann makes a very insightful analysis of the link between territory and sovereignty in his book *The Significance of Territory.* There he stresses how territory has to cope with the inequalities of space.

Globalization and territory

● **Globalization:** This is not the place to analyze the phenomenon of globalization, a process whose description was refined by Jean Gottmann when he described it at work in the big metropolis networks which he called – and this is an example of his extensive knowledge – the "Alexandrine system." Globalization has indeed become a favorite theme of politicians, essayists and the media, even though its *complexity* has not yet been fully grasped. Jean Gottmann clearly demonstrated that the globalization of the world economy should not be reduced to the speeding up of such a phenomenon as the movement of people, goods, ideas and currency (GOTTMANN, 1983).

The *world net* and the *internet* are only the most recent and most spectacular signs of this phenomenon. But there is continuity in the processes, which leads to a sharp lowering of the cost of transporting goods, linked to the huge expansion of marine traffic and harbors as well as to the transport of various goods "in bulk" by container. For many products, the cost of transport within national boundaries over a distance of 300 miles is higher than transporting the same products internationally over thousands of miles.

Thanks to computerization (Le Havre was indeed one of the first harbors to become computerized), documents circulate faster than the corresponding goods and the latter can change hands several times during transportation. On the subject of "networks of networks" in the virtual cyber world, Paul Virilio, the fashionable sociologist, was only transposing Jean Gottmann's vision when he described "the phenomenon of the virtual city, a sort of world-wide hyper centre of which the megalopolises are only the outskirts, the periphery."

The "compression" of time thanks to digital systems goes hand in hand with the compression of space due to advances in telecommunications and, more generally, advances in transport.

During my meetings with Jean Gottmann we spoke of the "negative side effects" of this evolution: the temptation to think only in terms of flows and networks and to neglect concrete spaces – the local, the regional. We spoke also of the consequences of the lack of spatial or temporal reference points for populations requiring accommodation, a space for accommodation, time for accommodation. And above all we spoke of the development of generalized individualism, as defined by Tocqueville, especially with reference to the United States where he was about to witness this phenomenon at its worst.

Another negative side effect is linked to the increasing complexity of the interaction between movements and networks. A complexity to which we often add complication through the introduction of ever more numerous rules and regulations.

This is one of the causes for the "world disillusion" as analyzed by P. Gauchet, with its corollary reactions: the feeling of powerlessness, leading to irresponsibility.

● **Territory:** The "counterpoint" to this tendency, which at times seems inevitable and which reduces territory to an entanglement of increasingly virtual movements, should indeed be the promotion of territory – local or regional. Territory is the ideal space for accommodation, an intermediary between the global and the local, that is, a space that can more or less be controlled.

The imperialism of universality – which goes hand in hand with the ebbs and flows of the modern world – discards those reference points that are indispensable to mankind. Without the geographic reference point of territory, we risk witnessing – as a reaction against the excesses of individualism – the "withdrawal of communities" and its negative side effects, leading to the decline of the nation-state, the latter often being too vast a

space whose identity is hard to perceive outside its (relative) linguistic identity. This is particularly obvious in the United States: what project is capable of transcending individualism other than a collective dream – the American *dream* (in other places it will be the welfare state ...)? Here, the overriding need for an identity is expressed through one's clan, blood, religion, sexuality, "district" – i.e. the various "tribes" and "gangs" that cohabit local streets and pavements. Many lament the excesses of "communitarianism" Anglo-Saxon style.

The case is clear: geographers need to rehabilitate the notion of territory and more precisely the notion of infra-national territory as a counterpoint to globalization. *Man wants to be someone but come from somewhere*. Spinoza, according to Jacques Lévy, tells us that man has a "natural need for civil status" which is linked to the feeling of being active within a close-knit community.

This rehabilitation of the local (regional) is all the more indispensable because this discussion of the local versus the global is also one of the aspects of the looming "social division" which seems to have become more of a *geographical division*.

There are those who live in the cyber world, who travel between conferences and symposiums, who surf the web, who are at ease with networks and who are aware of the latest fashion from New York or London; and there are those whose horizon is more "limited" and who confine themselves – or are confined – to the boundaries of their clan, their ghetto, i.e. spaces which are too simple, not diversified enough, which are *caricatures of the local*.

And so there is an increasing risk of a rift between people who belong to *several* networks and those who are locked into a single space, reduced to the dimensions of clan or identity. Such people only see the negative effects of globalization (relocation or shutdown of a factory, etc.) or of its most immediate form: Europeanization.

Territory is thus battling against globalization and its negative side effects: destruction, loss of identity, negative images of what is "the local." The sociologist Laki Laïdi recently remarked that "the more global the processes, the more localized the reactions."

Quest for identity

But can the return to a more widespread sense of cultural identity, one that is more complex than the communitarianist identity (which *is not* essentially territorial, with all the exchanges and the complexity that that involves), be part of the process of adapting to globalization, or better of improving local development?

The destiny of harbors and harbor cities – apart from the big megalopolises which are part of the "Alexandrine cities" dear to Jean Gottmann – seems to be a good example of the conflict between the global and the local, of the way in which this conflict has been weakened, sometimes dismantled; whereas the big megalopolises, despite having their own share of problems (probably under-estimated ...), have on the other hand managed to seize the opportunity given to them by globalization.

The more modest harbor cities like Le Havre seem to be a good example of this fundamental cultural challenge. Theoretically, these cities had all the tools they needed to soften the impact of globalization. Indeed, they were rich in dynamic leader groups turned towards internationalization. The sea and what constitutes "maritime identity" were calls to collective adventure beyond the diverging interests of the social classes. During the 19th century and up until the middle of the 20th century, the patriciate of both town and harbor were united in action. "Maritimity" also meant that the cities were a melting-

pot of different populations. In Le Havre, for instance, there were Cauchois farmers, Breton sailors, entrepreneurs from Alsace, white-collar workers from Britain, etc. Thus a true "harbor community" had been created (BAUDOIN and COLLIN, 1989).

A romanticized version of this collective adventure was recently described by a novelist from Le Havre (nephew of the geographer Marcel Hérubel) in his family saga: *La Maison Gelder* (HÉRUBEL, 1995).

Le Havre had become a city of innovations in several different areas: technical (the screw ship, navire à coque en fer), economic (the future cotton and coffee trade), social (the first labor exchange in France, the first hygiene committee), sportive (the first football club), etc. The last provincial merchant bank was based in Le Havre. All in all, Le Havre knew how to reconcile what Vigarié called harbor internationalism with a strong feeling of identity based on the uniqueness of its situation. After the Liberation of France, an urban architect from Le Havre suggested it became a free city like Hamburg!

There were, however, a series of obstacles that impeded growth and innovation – obstacles born out of the downturn of Le Havre's role as a harbor.

For years, trade in Le Havre slowed down industrial development beyond the processing of colonial produce. According to A. Maurois the port of Rouen and cotton were unaware of each other's existence.

Nevertheless, the harbor represented a source of wealth, offering people a way up in society through job opportunities that required limited training. As with all important harbors, the strong sense of local identity was linked with a set of specific characteristics dependent upon its maritimity, thus specific jobs, mainly masculine ones, requiring non-transferable, specialist skills, such as sailors, dockers, forwarding agents, would create particular ways of working and irregular employment, not to mention the trade unions in the class struggle – which was all the more rigid because of its strategic position ("the strategic strikes").

As in so many other harbor cities, there was no university for a long time, however an innovative approach to education (the first girls-only secondary school, etc.) and intellectual creativity, led to intellectual initiatives in the Protestant tradition such as a training school for overseas managers. However, the weakening of the local economy and the identity crisis did not start with the recent acceleration of globalization. The first symptoms had already appeared before the Second World War, when a series of government decisions (the Oil law in 1928, autonomy status for maritime ports, etc.) revived the old tradition of public power first incarnated by François 1st and Colbert. As early as 1966, A. Nicollet and I were writing about the consequences of Le Havre's individual characteristics in *Les Cahiers de Sociologie Economique*. Recently, John Barzmann and Madeleine Brocard have also analyzed this return to the tradition of state control reinforced by its "autonomous" status adopted in 1965-1966 (BARZMANN and BROCARD, 1996).

For many reasons, but particularly due to a certain weakening in the local patriciate, links between the town, the harbor and the Chamber of Commerce have been breaking down, which have been less controlled by the traditional notables. The two World Wars, particularly the second one, led to many a rupture and trauma. It can be said that a crisis in transmission occurred after 1950; any individual identity is also a legacy based on signs and monuments. Memory and heritage, two key components of how a community perceives itself, have been affected even if, in Le Havre as in other cities which were destroyed, people relied on those politicians who stayed there during the war, despite the bombs.

The rebuilding took place under the leadership of a presti-

gious Parisian architect, A. Perret, and although he followed national guidelines, some innovative ideas were put into practice, despite the economic shortages of that time (in particular the rather original rebuilding of some blocks of flats in co-ownership).

The growth of the global economy, however, took off very quickly with the expansion, led by the government, of heavy industry and MIDA. The success of the big multinationals was even greater with the development of containers after the first oil crisis. More and more, the harbor became a mere link – and the most fragile link because it was the most "static" one – in the worldwide chain of logistics. Big companies, such as Maersk or Evergreen from Taiwan, for example, could not tolerate more than a two-hour delay for their network of ships around the world.

Although bigger harbors such as Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg got stronger, their management methods are greatly integrated into their environment and the surplus inherited from a huge urbanization increased, the more medium harbors suffered belatedly first from the oil crisis and then from the global economic crisis.

The big harbors tried to exploit their maritime image – even when the part played by the harbor was undergoing a relative setback – through the renewal of its waterfronts and fallow lands (GAY, 1986). Examples abound: London, San Francisco, New Orleans, Hamburg, Boston. The role of international trade has become detached from the harbor (New York teleport in Staten Island, etc.) but keeps its cosmopolitan wealth: its cultural and linguistic plurality (GAY, 1994b).

The case of Copenhagen is a typical one. During the European Year of Culture, it was quite clear how strongly it was orientated towards Container expo. There are more and more important maritime events which lead to great urban developments: Barcelona (Olympic Games), Genoa (Christopher Columbus year), Boston (Garden Festival), etc.

The toughest blow to Le Havre was the loss of its liners: the laying up of the "France," sent into exile at the "quai de l'oubli" ("the quay of oblivion"), was a real tragedy which, now more than ever, is an integral part of its image as a harbor. The pre-1914 emigrants have been replaced by stowaways looking for hiding places in containers ...

Faced with such exogenous forces, the feeling of identity – which now only prevails in a few contested social groups (such as the dockers) – has given way to defensive behavior, a sort of withdrawal.

As early as 1966, in the Cahiers de Sociologie Economique, we were talking about a "besieged mentality" or an "obsidinal mentality": against the State and the multinationals, against Rouen (albeit a poorly-off rival), against the "Préfecture" which seemed to assert its authority from 1982 onwards, and even against decentralization. Le Havre suffers from being nothing more than "the biggest 'sous-préfecture' in France." Confronted with the decline in the shipbuilding industry, for instance, the struggle for employment is very often a lost cause.

Protecting the local heritage has turned into a sort of nostalgic withdrawal (epitomized by the crisis which followed the laying up of the "France"). As often happens with cities going through an identity crisis, the heritage and museum vocation, even if it is justified, is also a disguise or at least an excuse for a "momentary lack of imagination." The powerful maritime identity of yesteryear is no longer turned towards conquest and innovation but towards leisure activities, as characterized by the development of regattas. The "longing for the shore," analyzed by Alain Corbin, is manifested in the necessary and successful improvements to the beach and yachting harbor. The sea, which used to be part of a collective adventure, from sailor to shipowner, and which used to involve the whole city, has been reduced to an individual experience. Thus, the bourgeoisie of Le Havre was thrilled by the solitary achievements of

Paul Vatine, who disappeared at sea in 1999.

One might almost regret the fact that nowadays local innovation, which still exists, concentrates on cruise ships: the Club Med and the Windstar will not help us forget the "France" (now the "Norway") or the collapse of the shipbuilding industry.

The harbor, or at least the avant-port, is still an amazing site but as it became more remote from the city, it has lost the affection that it had in the past. The effects of globalization together with the over-expansion of the ship industry now make it look colder, more impersonal. Nor are the belvederes the objects of any attention any longer (the belvedere of the fort of Saint Adresse where I used to take Jean Gottmann is now nearly deserted).

The harbor has always been a noisy, smelly and messy place, but it has also been a place of poetry (albeit gloomy) and the picturesque. It has been the subject of novels (Le Tramway des grands basins by R. Las Vergnas) and of films such as Quai des brumes. Today, it has become an "environmental issue" and conjures up images of "smelly" factories. It is of interest only for the preservation of its "natural resources," which have been adopted by the local population for the pursuit of their leisure activities.

Finally, the latent social division threatened to be exacerbated by a spatial division, with each group withdrawing into their own area. The city became a place of numerous split identities, divided and for a long time reinforced by council policies. The city center, which is now off-center and too linear, does not participate in the integration of disadvantaged communities. Even the Maison de la Culture, created by Malraux, has become both a stake and a weapon in the conflict. Only the city's sporting identity, thanks to the presence of the local football club (march on Le HAC!), seems to keep afloat, thereby benefitting the old club ...

A policy of image building of the city using pretty pictures has for some time replaced the need to assert its own identity. Communication has at times won over creativity. However, even though the maritime identity of Le Havre seems to be weakening and its internal image fading away, paradoxically its external image remains strong – linked to memories of the past (the liners) and to its belonging to the region of Normandy – and relies on the organization of big popular events (the Armada de la Liberté, the fiftieth anniversary of the Normandy landing, etc.). Of course, there is a risk that the harbor image be linked to "circulation" (defined by Gottmann) as it used to exist in the past. This is how many Western European harbor cities (Bristol, Swansea, La Rochelle) tend to react, organizing an ever increasing number of nostalgic events: Brest 96, the starting point for many a yacht race (the Route du Rhum starting from Le Havre), the Armada of the century in Rouen in 1999, etc. In short, it is difficult to make the transition from an endogenous development to an acceptable exogenous one.

And thus there is a link between globalization – which dissociates the harbor from its numerous commercial and transfer activities – and the identity crisis. The latter is itself linked to the difficulty of setting up an ambitious and truly collective territorial – regional – project. Thus, in conclusion, the following questions have to be raised:

• Can the feeling of identity be a factor not only of growth but of development?

• Can one rely on an iconography – albeit dated – to give local development a fresh impulse?

• Are factors such as the breaking-up of traditional harbor activities (referred to nowadays as "dry ports/docks" ...) and the delocalization of management services absolute constraints? (figs. 8 and 9)

One wonders, when observing the social crisis affecting all "classical" harbor cities, and even the biggest ones like

Fig. 8: Partial view of Le Havre in the second half of the 20th century (in 1965).

Fig. 9: Partial view of Le Havre in the second half of the 20th century (in 1965).

Fig. 10: Recent general view of Le Havre. In the foreground the new city core with the waterfront to compare with the photograph taken in 1959 (fig. 2). In the background the new maritime industrial area with the extension PORT 2000-2006 in progress.

Antwerp and Rotterdam, where the very cosmopolitan nature of the population leads to reactions of rejection – as seen during the 2002 elections, especially in Rotterdam.

There are many handicaps, all the more so when one knows how the State disengages itself – through privatization – from the responsibilities that it traditionally used to take on, and when one is aware of the harbor's dependency on public orders (shipbuilding, arms, etc.). The result is of course a reduction in the financial resources of the harbor cities and autonomous ports

However, the weakness of France's desire to invest in its "maritime" heritage seems increasingly surprising at a time when the country suffers from the negative effects of policies which are too exclusively continental in nature – in terms of the congestion of overground transportation – but which open up new opportunities in the field of the redistribution of traffic/transport thanks to *feeder* and *international coastal navigation*. Finally, the negative effects of concentrating such activity around Paris are already well known, whereas the ubiquity of the "transactional city" (Jean Gottmann) offers new opportunities thanks to computerization ...

In short, the question is this: where is the best place to exploit the opportunities offered by globalization? One can certainly find it in a local setting. The territorial feeling centered around the presence of the estuary is defended and illustrated in a multidisciplinary periodical from Le Havre, significantly

entitled *Revue d'Ici*. In Le Havre, this feeling also benefits from the role of a young university: this creates a sense of "social connection" and has chosen both to position itself clearly as "maritime" and to get strongly involved in local development (Maison de l'Estuaire, Centre for Research on Logistics, etc.). Despite the threats towards "de-maritimization," the outward signs of which Vigarié analyzes, there are certain advantages to thinking in terms of what is local (fig. 10).

However, it might be advisable to broaden one's frame of reference by conjuring up a larger and stronger external image, essentially that of Normandy as a whole, with a myriad of links with the rest of the world. In France, is there not a fundamental choice to make between a maritime perspective and a local perspective, the latter being the "run for your life" option in the face of crisis and Parisian domination?

Nowadays, major harbors admittedly do not exist without the backdrop of an attractive city but they cannot exist either without being integrated into a genuine *regional* strategy, which is that of the big Hanseatic cities. It is only on a regional level that one can acquire the level of *complexity* and solidarity that are impossible to achieve on a purely local level.

This very brief analysis of an example of the de-structurization of a territory by the emergence of the global leads us to reflect, of course, on the lessons we must learn from those infra-national territories which have best succeeded in withstanding the effects of globalization or, even better, which have taken

advantage of it.

There are many examples abroad of the fact that condemned territories do not exist but instead that there are territories without projects and that success comes as much from added value as from high technology. Entire regions of "Middle Italy," the region of the *decentramento produttivo*, from Emilia-Romagna to Venetia, are well known examples. In all these cases, local services are developed within an appropriate territorial framework: small enough for a common project to emerge, big enough for complementarity and solidarity to establish themselves (GAY and WAGRET, 1997).

A geographical analysis of all those territories with a strong identity would be required in order to analyze its part in local development and to evaluate the role of iconographies, mentalities, traditions, of the communication of values, of the coming together of all doers, of the role of institutions and the way in which networks (European, worldwide) and territories – which Jean Gottmann showed were inseparable – link together.

Conclusion

Guided by Jean Gottmann's strong intuitions and following in his footsteps with the example of Le Havre, one can conclude that to develop a territory in the complex sense defined here is to give it a constructed identity. Thus, it becomes indispensable – to try and reconcile iconography and the challenges of maritime transportation, or globalization – to look further into the notion of *territory*. Here again, Jean Gottmann's thinking can help: what interests us here is that the framework can no longer be the harbor city on its own, with all its implied "insularity." One can go beyond it by strengthening the links with a particular network (for instance, the network of the International Commerce Centers or that of the International Association of Harbour Cities). But one cannot belong to a network without having a basis in a territory large enough to reach a certain level of complexity, of diversity, of spatial solidarity. In the face of globalization, territory is – much more than the local – a good space for *accommodation* as defined at the beginning of this article.

As early as 1982, I tried to show that harbors could not exist without being strongly integrated into the *regional* (GAY, 1982).

The strategic framework seemed to be that of the Basse Seine, if not that of Normandy as a whole, with its strong external image. The two major German harbor cities of Hamburg and Bremen, which are also *Länder*, get some of their strength from a powerful decentralized territorial position. To a large extent, the harbors of Benelux also show that being integrated into a solid territorial reality is a strong basis for "thinking globally and acting locally."

By striving to draw a link between the traditional *iconography* of the harbor and a more modern image – with the background of globalization with which it has come to terms – Le Havre is succeeding in creating an innovative synthesis, with the city rediscovering its traditions and experiencing a new sense of pride. In order to help build its modern image, Le Havre can rely on an ambitious territorial project named *Port 2000* (2001-2005), which has already spectacularly transformed the look of this harbor city (FRÉMONT, 1997)

This reconciliation between tradition and modernity, expressed in the resolutely contemporary urban development program and the innovative use of the old docks (where Le Havre is about to build a very modern Casino!) resulted in the city recently winning the much coveted award of *City of Art and History*.

Fully engaged in an innovative program of urban development because of its links with the cities of the *Normandie Metropole* network, Le Havre is showing us that the feeling of belonging and being integrated in the local and the regional – very far from being incompatible with globalization and maritime internationalization – is in fact an asset in today's world economy. A great harbor cannot exist without a great city and a great region.[2]

Thus, a harbor city like Le Havre, so frequently visited by Jean Gottmann, is a good illustration of the innovative concepts of this great geographer, who captivated me from our very first meeting.

Notes

1. *Cahiers de Sociologie Economique et Culturelle*, Le Havre, 1996, no. 26.
2. On all these points see two special issues of *Etudes Normandes* (Université de Rouen), no. 1 (2000) and no. 3 (2000), and our synthesis in the same journal, no. 2 (1997).

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