



D.R.

# Michel Lussault

## France

## The Cosmopolitan City

### The author

**Michel Lussault** is a geographer and a geography professor at the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon. The author of numerous books and scientific contributions, he has published *De la lutte des classes à la lutte des places* [From the Class Struggle to the Place Struggle] (Grasset, 2009). In his work, he develops an original approach to the spatial action of social operators by focusing mainly on the identification of elementary spatial skills.

### Bibliography

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***La Ville et l'urbain. L'état des savoirs*** [The City and the Urban Space. The State of Knowledge], under the direction of Michel Lussault, Thierry Paquot and Sophie Body-Gendrot (La Découverte, 2000)

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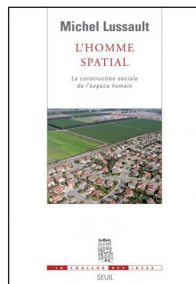
### Zoom

***De la lutte des classes à la lutte des places*** [From the Class Struggle to the Place Struggle] (Grasset, 2009)



"Living means going from one place to another, trying as much as possible not to bump into things," wrote George Perec. In fact, the very framework of our existence and daily life can be analyzed through the lens of spatial relations. The world of social work and what we live, day to day, constitutes a spatial stage on which actors interact, achieving their goals by using tools such as distancing, placing, delimiting, and crossing over. In this book, the reader will discover the similarities between building a fake entryway in a public housing project in Le Havre, wildlife management in the Vercors district, the racial conflict surrounding a tree in Jena, Louisiana, the development of major airports and theme parks, the sale of shellfish by an old man on a beach in southern India, and even the association Les Enfants de Don Quichotte's strategy for defending the homeless. All of these cases bring home the importance of the "test of space." Thinking about social organization, with the issue of space as a thread, should enable us to redefine how we regulate societies politically and plant the first seeds of an ethic of inhabited space, in keeping with the major problems of the contemporary world.

***L'homme spatial. La Construction sociale de l'espace humain*** [Spatial Man. The Social Construction of Human Space] [Seuil, 2007]



What is the common denominator between the tsunami that ravaged South Asian coasts on December 26, 2004, the spread of the SARS virus, promoting a city's image, local challenges to stop the installation of an incinerator, a micro-conflict between two individuals seated face to face,

an elected official's desire to change the name of the region he governs, and Paris's losing the bid for the 2012 Olympic Games? They are all social and spatial phenomena. And they cannot be fully understood if the spatial dimension is ignored. Curiously, although every instant of a human being's existence is spatial, and globalization manifests and expresses itself every day in spectacular spatial phenomena receiving abundant media attention, space is still a blind spot in our thinking about societies. This book tries to fill that gap. A primer on human space (particularly urban), it clarifies the political and social implications of such an approach.

«In *L'Homme spatial*, Michel Lussault explains how space constitutes a revealing component of our existence, even an essential tool for apprehending reality. This book, a work of unprecedented nature, opens up a capital philosophical field.»

**Pierre Bottura, *Philosophie Magazine***