{essays in history}

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Modernization Versus Preservation in Paris During the Gaullist Era: A Tale of Two Cities

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According to the *Saturday Evening Post* of September 20, 1958, "The Best Show in Paris is Free. This is Les Halles, the market place of Paris—a raucous, gory, fascinating bedlam where countesses rub shoulders with roughnecks, and no one ever goes to sleep."[1] Such was the charm of Les Halles that Emile Zola once called it "the belly of Paris" and even wrote a novel that took place entirely within its confines.[2] Others have called it Paris's heart and others still, its soul. Such personification made Les Halles seem to many like an old friend, always there with a warm bowl of onion soup on a cold Parisian winter evening. The destruction of the marketplace, especially that of the famed Baltard pavilions, was a tragic drama that began in 1959 and reached its climatic apex in 1971, setting off a firestorm of debate and public dissent not seen on an urban planning issue in nearly a century. The debate over Les Halles turned on a series of gripping juxtapositions or binaries—a battle between Gaullists and liberal intellectuals, capitalists and workers, modernity and tradition, the State and the city. Les Halles is important because, located in the physical and metaphorical center of the city, its fate was believed by Parisians to determine the future of Paris as well.

During the thirty years following World War II (known in France as *les trente glorieuses*) urban planning, reconstruction, and redevelopment were critical to France's postwar recovery. Several significant construction projects found their genesis during this period. The purpose of this article is not to discuss French (or even Gaullist) planning in general, but to examine one project in particular—the redevelopment of Les Halles. Compared to other projects of the time, Les Halles was not significant for its size or design; Les Halles' relevance was in what it represented—French identity.[3] Indeed, I focus on Les Halles because of its microcosmic utility, by which I mean that the struggles and confrontations over the Les Halles' redevelopment were similar to those faced by France at large as well. Les Halles' story is important because it provides insight into French postwar class relations, ideas about national identity, as well as the changing nature of French economic and social policy during the 1960s. I argue that the story of postwar Les Halles is emblematic of the story of postwar Paris and postwar France.

In the words of Rosemary Wakeman, "Les Halles is a palimpsest, a place that reflects the capital's many histories."[4] Thus, before discussing the aforementioned juxtapositions, in order to show the importance of the

Les Halles debate, some historical context may be useful. Les Halles' historic relationship with Paris began in 1137, when Louis VI ordered the two existing markets to be transferred to the center of town. In succeeding years, various kings made additions and changes to the market, notably Philip Augustus in 1183 and François I in 1543.[5] By the dawn of the nineteenth century, Les Halles had become congested and chaotic, having largely outgrown its capacity. In 1842, the Council of Paris created the *Commission des Halles* to find a solution to the problem, and it debated whether to rebuild or move the market. In 1848 the decision was made to expand and rebuild the market in its current location and an architectural competition was announced, which French architect Victor Baltard won in 1854. Baltard was forced to amend his original plans for a design of glass and concrete when Napoleon III called for "big umbrellas (of glass), nothing more," and Haussmann, who was in charge of the larger redesigning of Paris at the time, instructed "Iron, iron, nothing but iron."[6] The pavilions of Les Halles, the greatest example of fine French ironwork before the Eiffel Tower, were finally completed in 1888, bringing new vitality to the center of Paris.

In 1889, Paris hosted the World Exposition to celebrate the centennial of the French Revolution. Prime Minister Jules Ferry sought to use the fair to celebrate the achievements of French liberalism under the Third Republic. The French desired a bold theme that would allow France to stand out from the rest of Europe as the center of the newly emerging industrial world. Ferry had chosen to highlight French greatness in the realms of engineering, science, and technology. As part of this presentation two steel structures were commissioned that would showcase French ingenuity: the Eiffel Tower and the Gallery of Machines. Once these projects were completed, Paris boasted the world's tallest structure, the Eiffel Tower, the world's largest roof span over a single structure in the Gallery of Machines, and the world's most modern and expansive marketplace in Les Halles.[7] As the predecessor to the highlights of the Expo, Les Halles' construction set in motion a new identity for France, which, like the iron that it was built from, portrayed a sense of power and stability that would etch in the hearts of the French people a strong feeling of national pride.

The pavilions served their function well until the 1940s, when the familiar problems of congestion and removing unsanitary waste became

a concern once again. In 1949, the Economic Council of Paris abandoned the idea of renovating the marketplace in its current location, and in 1957 a committee was created to explore alternate locations for the market. Finally, on February 6, 1959, the Parisian Council of Ministers decided that the marketplace would be transferred to a new site at Rungis, near the Orly airport, and it is from this point that the drama and controversy surrounding Les Halles's embodiment of modern French identity began to emerge in public debate.[8]

As stated earlier, the destruction of Les Halles was infused with symbolic juxtapositions, all of which are interrelated and rooted in the genesis of the Gaullists and the Fifth Republic. One area where Gaullist visions of modernity had their greatest effect was on the social demographics of the Les Halles neighborhood. The markets had always dominated the character of the Halles district. The neighborhood, never as fashionable as the neighboring Marais, was home to Paris's working classes and poor, many of whom were employed in the markets. Rather than a neighborhood of mansions or fine homes, Les Halles consisted mostly of older and rundown structures, of which it was noted by l'Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme in July 1969:

With the exception of certain prestigious buildings, Les Halles does not present at first sight monumental ensembles of exceptional architectural quality, of which the need for conservation is indisputable. Its interest resides in characteristics less apparent and more subtle: an ancient urban fabric which determines the characteristic land allotment. Street patterns which conform to the historic ways of the capital; sequences of facades filled with fantasy and harmony, forming a refined and elegant urban décor.[9]

As the quoted passage implies, Les Halles was a neighborhood of character and history. The existence of the marketplace, the narrow winding streets, and the old buildings, coupled with the working-class residents who called Les Halles home, created a unique atmosphere that harkened to what Paris may have been in the early to mid-nineteenth century before Haussmann. Such a neighborhood provided low-income residents the opportunity to live in the center of Paris, which was quickly becoming more expensive, and provided a tangible and still perceivable link to a Paris that had otherwise disappeared.

As Louis Chevalier notes, economic hardships in the early twentieth century provided property owners with very little financial latitude to make repairs or improvements to their buildings; as a result, several buildings in the neighborhood gradually decayed or were abandoned altogether. To make matters worse, following World War II, as was the case following all major French wars since the Revolution, "an enormous movement in hearth-bound France … looking to escape 'the chill of provincial life'" brought scores of both provincials and the normal flow of immigrants (many from North Africa) into the French capital.[10] As the newly arrived could "always find work in Les Halles," the neighborhood became saturated, with the population density of the area reaching over 300 people per acre.[11]

The odd dynamic of so many living in conditions of deprivation amid the largest food market in the world was problematic. Yet as Wakeman has argued, "in the picturesque fantasy of Les Halles, urban decay and disorder somehow preserved traditional French identity … Les Halles was an incongruent display of class relations, of centrality and marginality."[12] Despite this strange nostalgic symbolism, it seemed that many in the Parisian Council agreed that the status quo of hardship and squalor could no longer be maintained, nor could the congestion, the prevalence of rats, or the existence of prostitution. A change had to be made.

When the Gaullists came to power in 1958 and formed the Fifth Republic under the leadership of Charles de Gaulle, France was in dire need of a fresh direction. After her embarrassment and occupation during World War II, and now, with the independence of her colonial crown jewel Algeria seeming imminent, France was no longer the self-described glorious world power that it was under the Third Republic. The Fourth Republic was (according to Gaullists) ineffective and constantly mired in parliamentary bureaucracy that made strong leadership all but impossible.[13] The failures and misery that the French people experienced under the Fourth Republic had a lot to do with why so much of the French public looked backwards with envy to the heyday of the Third Republic, of which Les Halles was one of its most recognizable symbols. The Fifth Republic, however, would be different than the Fourth—strong, assertive, and forward looking. Indeed, the Fifth Republic marked a dramatic shift in the type of men who had access to

power, as the political, moral, and economic circumstances of the post-war era "allowed new men to rise to the top in the business world and to occupy those positions most important for the fate of Paris."[14]

Was the rise of the Gaullists and the creation of the Fifth Republic really a dramatic change from the Fourth?[15] This question is aptly answered by Philip Nord, who has argued that much of the Fifth Republic was built upon foundations that were first laid during the Fourth Republic, and some even dating to the end of the Third Republic and the Vichy Regime.[16] Figures such as Michel Debré, who was largely responsible for creating the *Ecole nationale d'administration* (ENA), France's elite *grande école* for public administration, were instrumental to the Fifth Republic's construction. The conventional narrative of French politics under the Third Republic is based on a diffused political infrastructure managed by often-mediocre bureaucrats who became Vichy collaborators trapped in a system traditionally marked by bribery and inefficiency. Under the direction of Debré, and running parallel with the restructuring of Sciences Po (*Institut d'études politiques de Paris*, or Paris Institute of Political Studies)the creation of the ENA significantly altered French political culture—at least in theory. The ENA would create new servants of the nation, a new Gaullist elite (who incidentally were largely descendants of the old elite from the previous republics) who would reflect ideals of integrity, efficiency, and good government. These newly minted technocrats sought to break from the chains of tradition in order to guide France onto the path of modernization via principles of centralized planning under the direction of highly trained technical experts. As De Gaulle once said, "It was time for France to marry its century."

The first problem the technocrats faced was how to modernize France from its state of decadence and decay. In order to create a more expansionist and progressive nation, the Fifth Republic emphasized technical expertise over a parliament that had become uninspired to take reformative action. As Nord argues, the new buzzwords of the Republic became "modernization" and "productivity."[17] Under technocratic guidance, France nationalized several key industries, including the energy and utilities sectors, and took large ownership stakes in other industries such as banking. The result of these nationalizations became known as technocorporatism.

Technocorporatism sought financial efficiency and profit maximization in the entities the State ran, and organized the controlled firms within a corporate hierarchy that placed experts at the top and wage laborers at the bottom. These hierarchies created a tension between the technocrats and the labor unions, which led many in the working class to resent the government while at the same time developing an increased reliance on the burgeoning welfare state. This resentment would later break into open rebellion in May 1968. However, despite these labor tensions, in the early 1960s the Gaullists and their technocratic frontline were still firmly in control and working steadily to enact their new vision for France.

The Les Halles project gave the new government its first opportunity to chart such a new course; indeed, it became emblematic of "the alliance between state power and capitalism … of state supremacy and the virtues of centralized planning."[18] De Gaulle himself "saw the project as a measure of French prestige, a project that would fulfill Paris's historic destiny and catapult it into the ranks of modern world capitals."[19] The Gaullists desired a plan that would transform Les Halles into a business enclave, complete with an international trade center, 900,000 square meters of high-rent office space, 3,000 luxury apartments, and over 800 hotel rooms, all to be found in a series of skyscraping towers: "the urban planning operation of the century."[20]

The financial and legal architecture leading to Les Halles' destruction is illustrative of early Fifth Republic technocratism and shows some of the influence that the Vichy regime had on Gaullist thinking. In the Paris region during the 1960s, urban planning functions were fulfilled by two different bodies, the *Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Parisienne* (IAURP-Development and Planning Institute of the Paris Region) at the regional level, and the *Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme* (APUR- Paris Planning Studio) at the city level.[21] For a city-based project like Les Halles, APUR was in charge of planning, but the Prefectural office it worked under retained overall authority and controlled the larger direction of the planning. To implement the planning proposals, a publicly-owned company—*Société Anonyme d'Economie Mixte* (SEM-Public Development Corporation) was created, later to become SEMAH (SEM *d'Aménagement de Rénovation et de Restauration du Secteur des Halles*- Les Halles Redevelopment,

Renovation, and Rehabilitation Public Corporation). The city owned 51% of SEMAH, while the French government controlled 25%, and private savings and banking institutions held the remaining 24%.[22] The controlling board of SEMAH was comprised of State ministerial representatives and city councilors. To support SEMAH's efforts, the National Assembly enacted various statutes such as *Code de l'Urbanisme* to allow SEMAH comprehensive redevelopment powers and to delegate to SEMAH compulsory purchase powers and controls on land speculation in the designated Les Halles development area in order to keep prices stable. Such hierarchal planning and implementation structures, supported by a statutory scheme, were reminiscent of the Vichy regime's own organization as they planned their own future for Paris.[23]

In 1966 SEAH (*Société d'Etudes d'Aménagement des Halles,* another planning subgroup of the Paris city council, created in 1963 as a small study team to create planning options for Les Halles) released its planning recommendations based on four criteria:

1. The retention of the fundamental character and activities of the neighborhood, with the exception of the market pavilions.
2. The total restoration of buildings in some of the area.
3. The rehabilitation of some areas to provide lower income groups with increased residential standards, but without disturbing the social equilibrium of the area.
4. The complete redevelopment of the market and peripheral properties.[24]

It was from these initial guidelines that the proposal for the international trade center and the luxury apartments that would replace Les Halles came. SEAH's recommendations were completely ignored, and the amount of commercial space proposed by APUR and the architectural firms it had hired was twice what SEAH had proposed.

The plan was a drastic shift from the existing purpose and character of the Les Halles neighborhood, and existing residents knew their time was limited as suggested by a poster on a building to be destroyed, which read:

The center of Paris will be beautiful. Luxury will be king. The buildings of the St. Martin block will be of high standing. But we will not be here. The commercial facilities will be spacious and rational. The parking immense. But we won't work here anymore. The streets will be spacious and the pedestrian ways numerous. But we won't walk here anymore. We won't live here anymore. Only the rich will be here. They have chosen to live in our quarter. The elected officials responding to their wishes have decided. The renovation is not for us.[25]

The passage stands in stark contrast to this passage discussed earlier:

With the exception of certain prestigious buildings, Les Halles does not present at first sight monumental ensembles of exceptional architectural quality, of which the need for conservation is indisputable. Its interest resides in characteristics less apparent and more subtle: an ancient urban fabric which determines the characteristic land allotment. Street patterns which conform to the historic ways of the capital; sequences of facades filled with fantasy and harmony, forming a refined and elegant urban décor.[26]

The destruction of the Baltard market pavilions and the rehabilitation of the neighborhood surrounding Les Halles would be a significant change. With the exception of the Latin Quarter, Les Halles was the last neighborhood in central Paris to retain its connections to Third Republic Paris and serve as a refuge for working-class inhabitants. The new Les Halles, as the poster implied, would be modern, with wider avenues and new residents of a different class. The Les Halles project signified the politics of grandeur. The proposed towers, the luxury apartments, the hotels, were meant to show the world that France was putting its tumultuous beginning to the century behind it, and now was re-emerging as a center for international business and as an example of modern city planning.

At this juncture it is helpful to provide an example of what I am referring to with the term "preservationists." Like with the Gaullists, it can be problematic to group all of those opposed to the Les Halles redevelopment project under one term. The preservationists consisted of journalists, young (often Marxist) students, and various neighborhood associations. In the late 1960s, Parisian redevelopment increasingly became synonymous with realty speculation, corruption, and state

control. Many project administrators worked in concert with private developers and banks, and often left their government jobs to take highly paid positions at these firms once large government projects had been procured.[27] Paris Préfet Marcel Diebolt is a prime example of such a figure.[28] Secrecy was also deemed to be a problem as technocratic planners often made decisions without open discussions or architectural competitions. Neighborhood associations were instrumental in combating this behavior. As one report from the *Préfecture de Police* shows, these neighborhood associations did not go unnoticed.[29]

The *Préfecture de Police* report on one particular association provides insight into the types of people who joined these associations and what they sought to accomplish. The report consists of a series of correspondence between the Préfet de Police and the Préfet de Paris. The most recent memo, dated March 27, 1969 is simply titled "Association." The police Préfet stated that they were watching a group called the "*Association des Locataires du Quartier des Halles et des Secteurs Limitrophes."* The letter states that the purpose of the group was to defend the material and moral interests of the tenants of the Halles district, including against any actions arising from the decisions of the Council of Paris. Attached to the letter was a list of the association's officers and a copy of the association's constitution.

What likely caught the attention of the police is found in a memo of November 6, 1968, which stated that the association, which also operated as the "*Action Culturelle et Sociale du Quartier des Halles,"* had been distributing leaflets around Les Halles. The leaflets were meant to draw attention to the inhabitants of Les Halles and the consequences those residents could face based on the city council's potential actions in the neighborhood. The leaflet urged people to share their concerns with the Council and to support cultural and social uses of the space that served the existing residents. According to the police report, the association may have been trying to capitalize on a "manifesto" published in June 1967 in *Le Monde* on the need to give priority of the Les Halles neighborhood to cultural activities. The "manifesto," which was signed by sixty-seven world personalities of the entertainment industry, stated that the associations defending Les Halles are "determined to fight any project with the primary imperative of profit, or that will lead to a

concentration of administrative offices or businesses and destroy the balance of the social center."[30]

The parent association of both the aforementioned associations was the Union Champeaux. The police report expressed its concern that the Union Champeaux envisioned the consolidation of all the local associations in order to maximize their power. The report also noted that such a group would trend "gauchiste" (leftist) in nature and that the association had over 300 active (dues paying) members. At the end of the report, the police assembled one-page dossiers on each of the five board members of the Union Champeaux. The dossiers provide an interesting insight into the makeup of the association. The President, Mr. Lucien Gaillard, was 40 years old at the time of the dossier (1968) and was married with two children. He worked as a trade representative for several different businesses, including a coffee company and a jam company. In addition to his sales position, Mr. Gaillard was also the deputy mayor of the 2ndarrondissement of Paris and lost a bid in 1965 for the city council as the representative of the "Freedom for Paris" party. The other members had similar profiles, ranging in age from their late-twenties to mid-sixties, most professionally employed, with political leanings that were either leftist or centrist.[31]

In addition to the leaflets, another successful event (perhaps the association's most successful preservation effort) was the production of a photographic exhibition of the neighborhood's old buildings. The exhibition was staged in March 1968 and attracted more than 30,000 people. The success of this exhibition helped to win public support for preservationist causes, and over the succeeding years, government officials broke down and allowed greater public participation in the urban planning process.[32]

Although the preparation of dossiers on the association's officers and the creation of a running narrative of the association's activities may at first glance suggest that the police and city officials were concerned with the existence of such associations, my archival research on the Paris Police Department suggests otherwise. The Paris Police Department has a long history of keeping detailed records and maintaining surveillance of nearly all activities in the city of which it is aware. Rather than classify the existence of such records as concern, a more likely descriptor would be prudent caution; this is especially true in the wake of May 1968, when

the file on the Union Champeaux was opened. Nonetheless, these police records are valuable because they provide unique insight into the personalities and structure of the associations that lobbied to save Les Halles. The members of the Union Champeaux came from arrondissements across the city, held a wide range of occupations, varied in age, marital status, and to lesser degrees political affiliation. Such a composition suggests that there was widespread appeal to save Les Halles, and that preservation efforts were being generated from areas beyond the Les Halles neighborhood itself. Such widespread support shows that a wide array of Parisians felt they had a stake in the outcome of Les Halles and that the battle over the neighborhood and the pavilions involved more than the working class, the market workers, or Gaullist ambitions. Les Halles was truly a place for everyone.

The way in which the Gaullist vision of modernization and grandeur contrasted with the preservationists' own visions is well illustrated in the transcript of an interview of Paris Préfet Marcel Diebolt.[33] Diebolt, who was trained in law, was in charge of all urban planning matters in Paris.[34] As the Council began to explore the idea of a subterranean complex to connect the expansion of the underground metro lines and the new RER lines, Diebolt said a goal of the project was to bring activity to the center of Paris. He said, "In one word, the future of the neighborhood would be human."[35] He cited the proposal of green spaces, and the cultural, entertainment, and recreation amenities, as well as the new housing being built. Diebolt noted these changes "will finally create a true place for man in the city."[36] What Diebolt did not mention is that the housing was luxury housing, geared to a new class of residents—the upper class. The amenities were meant to cater to the new luxury apartment dwellers. Also absent is the plan to locate the Ministry of Finance in the place where the market place once stood. When asked about the existing working-class residents who would be displaced, Diebolt responded that the *Societé d'aménagement des Halles* (the public/private company charged with developing Les Halles) would provide them housing in the new suburbs sprouting outside of Paris. Diebolt argued that "if changes are not made, the neighborhood once full of life risks becoming depressed, we must make sure the heart of Paris is a living heart."[37]

Diebolt's comments make the juxtaposition with the preservationists clear. To the preservationists, the neighborhood already had a heart, one that belonged to the working-class Parisians who had been living in Les Halles for more than a century. They believed that Les Halles was about tradition, the small shops that supported the workers of the marketplace, and the neighborhood functioning as a place where the social classes of Paris came together. To develop Les Halles in the way Diebolt proposed was simply to move the working classes out of Paris and to exclude them from the renovation. Although publicly promoted as a project to move Paris towards much needed modernization, behind the Gaullists' plans for Les Halles was a vision of a more gentrified Paris. With its central location, Les Halles provided the Gaullists the opportunity to re-define Paris. They saw Les Halles as a place where well-to-do residents could have beautiful central Parisian views from their apartment and office windows, a place that would show the world community that Paris was still a relevant financial center with a modern infrastructure. Les Halles was their opportunity to show the world that France had finally adapted to the twentieth century.

To be clear, the historical and emotional significance of Les Halles to Paris was not completely lost to the Gaullists. For them, the choice was one of living in the past or living in the present and planning for the future. The way the Gaullists approached the decision of how to treat Les Halles is representative of the technocratic thought process that guided Gaullist political ideology. At the end of the interview, Diebolt was asked if he did not feel at all a "little tug to the heart" in relation to Les Halles' impending disappearance. He responded:

Of course, like every Parisian, I can only regret, sentimentally, the departure of Les Halles that have so long been attached to the life of Paris, its activities, its style, and its charm. Certainly, it is a bit of Paris that is leaving. But, one must live in one's own century. This departure is more than necessary—it is indispensible. The transfer answers the economic, urban, and social needs. For my part, I am confident in the future heart of Paris and I am convinced that it, in another form, and with another style, will be an essential element in the life of the capital. [38]

This paradox between living in the past and living in the present becomes even clearer in a paper delivered to a conference on the

development of Les Halles.[39] The paper is broken into two components, “Paris Face A Son Avenir” (Paris faced with its future) and “Les Halles, Face Au Present” (Les Halles faced with its present). The paper begins by recognizing that the mere mention of Les Halles evokes the urban center, a privileged place that is reflective of the capital. However, the problem remains of how to continue as a “living city” that is currently paralyzed and which finds its existence in outdated structures that belong more to the past than to the future. As the paper states, “the first rule of action in Paris is to do nothing and to change nothing about this ‘je ne sais quoi’ of fantasy, history, and ideas that make up Paris.” As the quotation implies, the preservationists were wrapped up in protecting a mythical Paris, a city that existed in minds and memories, but no longer in a functioning reality. The paper continues, noting that the evolution of Paris had already begun. In technocratic fashion, it cites a litany of studies and statistics that show why change is both the logical and sensible choice—overruling emotional and historical considerations. In closing, the paper broke down the choices regarding Les Halles into three options:

The first solution tends to eliminate modern world nuisances likened to business and aerates and greenifies the numerous monuments that are a testament to the poor. The consequences of this option are incontestably a return to calm and a more balanced life, but which brings a lessening of financial value and creates no investment in infrastructure, a lessening of economic activity, and stagnation of real estate, the lot of which is not likely to implant the cultural activity that is desired by all.

The second option is intended to sustain and confirm the current economic level while adapting the structures to their dominating function. A slight densification of tertiary activities can be considered. Incentives clearly directed toward the rehabilitation and restoration could improve the habitat conditions, while maintaining most of the older frames.

The third alternative would see notable densification of business activity, the price of which is massive and modern “concentrations” (skyscrapers) which are therefore aggressive toward the environment and would neutralize the historical and cultural assets of the neighborhood.[40]

In one sense, the real problem facing Les Halles was that the preservationists considered the Gaullist vision to fall under the third option, the Gaullists saw the preservationists in the first option. Both, however, believed their own vision was the second option.

A grand architectural competition was held, and in the spring of 1967 the designs were exhibited to the public. André Fermigier, an art historian and journalist for *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a left-leaning French intellectual magazine, led the charge against the grand Gaullist plans with melodramatic bravado. Fermigier wrote a series of articles over the next several years entitled *La Bataille de Paris*, designed to appeal to Parisians' emotional heartstrings in an effort to "save Paris." One article, entitled "*Menaces sur Paris: Néron, Sixte Quint et Napoléon n'eurent pas à faire de choix plus essentiels que ceux qui seront faits demain aux Halles,*" and its implication that never in hundreds of years of Parisian history was there a choice so integral to Paris, shows just how serious Fermigier believed this choice to be. [41] Fermigier cast the debate as one between commerce and modern skyscrapers on the one side, and neighborhood charm and historic identity on the other. He wrote, "the tower is inhumane, but gives the illusion of power,"[42] whereas Les Halles is "one of the richest historical memories of Paris."[43] Fermigier went on, accusing Parisian (and French) officials of behaving "like a private company concerned only to maximize the profits of the land it owns," and only too willing to "sellout" "one of the greatest successes of metal architecture of the 19th century…where you will see a forest of arcs, of charm, agility, and a decency that you will surely regret the impending disappearance of."[44]

Fermigier was not alone; fellow *Observateur* journalist Maurice Duverger's "Open Letter to the King on the Future of Les Halles" deemed André Malraux's dream of a new Versailles as a testimony to the century of de Gaulle: "The Sun King himself did not dare destroy the Cité or the Marais to construct Versailles."[45] Similar dramatic headlines began to appear in other Parisian papers, noting the evictions of the working-class and the numbers of people who demonstrated against the government.[46] The public responded, aghast at the audacity of the Gaullists' desire to appropriate for themselves and their interests a part of Parisian history; de Gaulle would be forced back to the drawing board. Nostalgia had won the first round.

For many, the destruction of Les Halles was symbolic of the destruction of Paris itself. For centuries, Les Halles represented the energy of Paris, the city's social contrasts, the mixing of classes, and the grandeur of the Belle Époque. The process of destruction was slow and painful. First the working class disappeared, banished to the *banlieues*, then the pavilions were destroyed and replaced with a gaping hole that remained until 1977. [47] It seemed Paris was quickly becoming unrecognizable to many of its citizens. Les Halles's supporters feared that Paris had entered an age where duration or longevity no longer mattered, that Paris had entered a cycle where what was "old" must now become new.[48] According to the French sociologist and public intellectual Henri Lefebvre:

I have the impression that architecture and urbanistic interventions have not matched the transformation of the city. I have lived in the centre of Paris for the past thirty years and have seen it transformed. Only a few years ago the centre was virtually abandoned, then reoccupied in an elitist fashion…In my building behind the Pompidou Centre, the old people have for the most part died and apartments are occupied by offices. They also want to push me out to have my apartment. I have the feeling that the centre is becoming museumfied and managerial. Not politically, but financially managerial.[49]

This yearning for the past was not new to Parisians, who had similar fears during the Haussmannization of Paris, including when the Baltard pavilions were built at Les Halles in the 1860s. In an 1874 study of Parisian life, journalist Maxime Du Camp reflected on Les Halles:

The change has been profound and so radical that nothing has been left of the past. The pillars, those famous pillars of the Halles of which so much has heretofore been said, have disappeared; the criss-cross passages, dirty, unhealthy, by which one arrived with difficulty on the square, have given way to large passageways, airy and commodious; those cabarets which, at midnight, opened their doors to the entire vagabond population of the big city…have been uprooted and moved outside the limits of Paris; in modifying this area, in stripping it, it has been moralized.[50]

Du Camp's reveals that reservation towards change is not unique to the twentieth century. Each intrusion of "progress" appears to come at the cost of something familiar. As the passage shows, even in the 1860s

Parisians resisted the new (the Baltard Pavilions) and pined for the old. Like their predecessors, Parisians of the 1970s worried that the loss of an icon would result in a Paris they no longer knew or understood.

This loss of familiarity can also be interpreted as a loss of control. The postwar years and the new Gaullist regime brought great changes to France; among them was the perceived level of control by the government. This fear of control would be a central issue in the May 1968 uprising that had the potential to bring the Fifth Republic to an end. According to French sociologist Raymond Aron, "In the long run the French are not intended for a symbolically tough government; they crave men sympathetic to their grievances, even unjustified, and who temper the rigors of administration by concern for private interests—even if these interests do not appear worthy of respect to those devoted to the sole rationality of the collective interest."[51] Aron's comments are illustrative of the juxtaposition between the Gaullists and those who supported the preservation of Les Halles. The struggle over the fate of Les Halles was a battle for control. To the preservationists, Les Halles represented a connection to France's past, a past that connected them to a time before the rigors of two wars, an economic depression, and decolonization. For the Gaullists, Les Halles meant opportunity, the opportunity to align Parisian infrastructure with their vision for the future.[52] This battle between visions of the past and future, and over what degrees of governmental control were appropriate came to a boiling point in the events of May 1968, and the result of these events would prove important in the outcome over the battle for Les Halles.

Although an in-depth discussion of the events of May 1968 are beyond the scope of this article, a brief narration of these events will enable a more complete understanding of why the defenders of Les Halles fought as passionately as they did and where Les Halles fit in the greater political and social tensions that were present in France at this time.[53] The May uprising started in quite a simple manner and it would be hard to imagine anyone foreseeing how quickly the tensions would spread, and how deep. In November 1967, students at the Nanterre campus of the University of Paris began to protest over the right to entertain members of the opposite sex in their dorm rooms. Added to the qualms were overcrowded classes, displeasure at the poor state of the facilities, and dissatisfaction with the amount of financial support students were

receiving. These were all issues that had been voiced earlier in 1966, and what then was a series of small gatherings soon became a mass rally in 1967. The new wave of student protests in May of 1968 came with the addition of more radical and militant students with a larger political agenda. Many of these students were Marxists and Trotskyists, seeking a larger social revolution. These militants managed to interject additional issues such as the war in Vietnam and American capitalism into the debate, and soon the students' desire for more sexual freedom seemed insignificant. On 6 May, after battling the police in the streets of Paris, the students managed to take control of the Sorbonne, declaring the University of Paris "an autonomous people's university."[54]

The initial reaction to the students by then Prime Minister Pompidou and President de Gaulle was very conciliatory. This point is important, as the students' (dismissive) reaction to Pompidou's initial leniency would be remembered a few years later in the protests to save Les Halles. Pompidou believed that if he gave in to the students' demands, the government would gain the moral high ground and eventually could take control once public opinion swung in their direction. Instead, the concessions only emboldened the students, and their movement spread to a group of autoworkers at Renault, who overtook control of their factory and imprisoned the factory manager. Soon after, doctors, lawyers, journalists, and other professionals joined the rebellion against authority.

Throughout the rest of May, the movement seemed to pick up steam until de Gaulle made his theatrical move. On May 29, de Gaulle announced, to the surprise of Pompidou and the rest of the cabinet, that he was tired and needed a break at his country estate, and he left Paris by helicopter. Hours later, news reached Pompidou that de Gaulle's helicopter never arrived and was nowhere to be seen; de Gaulle had vanished. For five hours speculation ran wild, many believing that the helicopter had crashed and that de Gaulle was dead. In fact, de Gaulle had secretly gone to Baden Baden, the German spa town, to meet with one of his top generals to gauge the loyalties of the military. With the assurance that French troops were behind the Republic, de Gaulle was ready to take action. The Gaullists began to stage mass rallies of veterans and supporters of their own. De Gaulle followed this drama by announcing he was dissolving parliament and calling for new elections.

The bold moves by the Gaullists paid off; the "revolution" lost fervor and the Gaullists won the elections.

What was the meaning of May 1968 and how does it connect to the debates around Les Halles? It is impossible to assign one particular cause or lesson to the 1968 revolution, but there are some dominant themes that have emerged. Prime among those themes is a resistance to "American" ideas of modernity and the changing nature of an increasingly mechanized, globalized, and corporatized world. As André Malraux argued in an interview with *Le Monde* in June 1968, "We do not confront the need for reforms, but rather one of the most profound crises that our civilization has known … This general rehearsal of a future drama expressed, among the strikers as well as among those who watched them pass, the consciousness of the end of a world … Our society is not yet adapted to the civilization of machines."[55] Among the "machines" that Malraux may have been referring to was the emergence of mass consumerism and consumption that was brought from America. The proposed projects at Les Halles, the skyscrapers, the office space, the luxury apartments were all symbols of the new future that France had long resisted and some, like Fermigier and Chevalier, feared.

The original Gaullist plans for the Les Halles site rallied Parisians because they wanted to stop the "Manhattanization" of Paris.[56] These fears were not unfounded, as the Tour Montparnasse had just been erected, and the plans for La Défense made clear that the view up the Champs Élysées past the Arc de Triomphe would never quite be the same.[57] As Fermigier wrote in the *Nouvel Observateur*:

There was a Paris to which everyone was attached, and within which was born another city, humane, welcoming, tolerable on both the social and urban level. The least which one can say is that modern Paris, the Paris of the second half of the twentieth century, is a miserable failure. Look at Maine-Montparnasse … the sector around Place d'Italie … the lamentable Front de Seine of the 15th arrondissement … and the things we shall see tomorrow…Paris resembles more and more the capital of an undeveloped country, bristling with capitalist symbols and poor counterfeits of an architecture which has some meaning in New York, but which here is the architecture of deception.[58]

Fermigier was an ardent opponent of Gaullist "modernization." Where the Gaullists wanted to introduce modern skyscrapers that were a sign of progress for the time, Fermigier believed that character and identity should be figured into the equation. While corporatism and skyscrapers had long been a part of the New York experience, Paris had a different architectural identity, one where most buildings were of a standard height, had a longer history, and told a story about Paris. To replace such an identity with another so foreign was not only to deceive Paris but, in many ways, to betray Paris as well.

Although the Gaullists were able to claim "victory," at least over the ideological conflict as it existed in those limited months during the spring of 1968, the larger struggle between the parties was carried on in the debate over Les Halles. As has become obvious by now, this debate was rooted in the confrontation between humanistic ties to the past character of Les Halles that resonated with preservationist supporters and the opportunity for progress and modernization that the site presented city planners. Local associations used the image of Old Paris, and a narrative of Les Halles as the heart of that Paris, as the starting point for their defense. The market and surrounding neighborhood was described in terms of its energy, its smells coming from the charcuteries, cafes, bistros, or flower stalls, and the eclectic mix of people who could be found patronizing, walking, and working in the streets and market stalls, such as the prostitutes, hefty porters, and *flaneurs*. It was a place where the homeless and drifters came to find work or the social elites a bowl of onion soup after a night of partying on the town. Les Halles was a place where after the nine o'clock trading bell was rung (at the wholesale market) signaling the end of the trading day, the local poor were given ten minutes to sift through the crates of unsold food before the city sanitation workers came to haul it away.[59] Les Halles was a place for everyone. Andre Fermigier noted that, "all true Parisians adore this quarter, those who live in it, those who come to it to dine, to buy their flowers or their crate of tomatoes, to hear an accordionist, to breathe the scents of former times, to seek—in their poverty alas and their solitude—a little warmth and comfort, or simply some work."[60]

While many Parisians may have felt a unique emotional connection to Les Halles, such was not the primary sentiment at city hall where technocratic practicality ruled the day. The time had finally come to take

definitive action, and on March 4-5, 1969, the hustle and bustle of Les Halles came to an end when the market was shut down and transferred to the new facility at Rungis. The panoply of pleas to save the market, via petitions, letters, editorials, and books had fallen on deaf ears. The urbanist Gaullists had won another important round, with the market activity now moved to the suburbs. The next step would be to destroy the pavilions and begin the work of building something new that would capture Gaullist ambitions for the capital.

The move of the market left many people in shock; several had believed such a move was so drastic that neither de Gaulle nor Pompidou would actually allow it. Up to the point of the market's removal, the effort to save Les Halles had been somewhat demure. Once the initial shock of the move began to wear off, a new preservation movement began in earnest, this time with a goal of saving the actual pavilions from destruction. While debate on what to build at the site stagnated, many of the pavilions were converted for use as art galleries, theatres, public lectures, concerts, a circus, and even an ice-skating rink. Les Halles also hosted a special exhibition of the works of Picasso, an event that drew over 70,000 visitors to the pavilion.[61] Although the idea of using Les Halles to build a new cultural space had been considered by the government, the people of Paris had shown that one could already exist in the old pavilions. New businesses even began to move in to cater to Les Halles' new clientele, including bookstores, antique dealers, cafés, and a range of fashionable boutiques. The robust cultural resurgence that began to emerge at Les Halles gave the preservationist associations great hope for the future. For one leftist magazine, many of the partisans of the 1968 revolt found Les Halles "the natural place for creativity in a popular setting and the starting point for a cultural revolution."[62] However, the idea of a "cultural revolution" did not sit comfortably with Pompidou, nor did the possibility of even mere festive gatherings that could lead to further contestation. The more enthusiasm for Les Halles as a cultural space grew, the harder it would become for Pompidou to realize his dreams of turning the neighborhood into a financial center and example of international modernization. By 1971 the Gaullists' resolve to move forward with their redevelopment plans began to solidify.

In July 1971, as the last grains of sand fell to the bottom of the hourglass, the preservationists knew they were operating on borrowed time. Over the course of the month, a flurry of articles began to appear in the major Parisian papers as well as many smaller papers with a targeted audience. The headlines talked about "the suspense at Les Halles" and reported when various demonstrations were being planned. On July 11, 1971, a decidedly leftist paper, *La Cause du Peuple*, came out with a headline that read, "Pompidou détruit les Halles. Il exile en Banlieue 600 familles. Elles resistent," (Pompidou destroyed Les Halles. He exiled 600 families to the suburbs. They resist.)[63]. Within the article there are sub-headlines that discussed Pompidou's desire to make Paris a city without people and focused on corporate profits. The article then describes the residents of the Saint Martin and Beaubourg neighborhoods (near Les Halles) as the final defenders against the attack of the bourgeoisie, urging readers to come to their aid. Four days after the article, on 15 July, over 3,000 protesters came to Les Halles to protest its destruction and create a barrier of people around the pavilions.[64] One paper later called this demonstration a re-run of 1968.[65] For several hours, the thousands of protestors engaged in screaming and shoving with 500 officers of the *Compaigne Republicaine de Securite*, the State's anti-riot unit, in an effort to assert control over the pavilions. Similar protests continued for much of the month, but the end result in each was a draw. With each mass rally the protestors managed to delay the bulldozers, but they did not manage to change the will of Pompidou.

As the protests grew in intensity, a Marxist theater group staged an anti-government play in a section of the pavilions. These developments had the Pompidou administration on edge, and in their view the actions of these protestors represented a direct test of their authority much like the test they had faced in 1968. Three years earlier Pompidou had urged de Gaulle to be lenient with the students in an effort to gain the moral high ground and with hopes that the protestors would then stand down. Of course, that strategy had failed and events got out of hand. Pompidou did not want a repeat performance at Les Halles. By the end of June the prefect and other officials had decided with finality that the essential part of the demolition had to be completed by the end of August in order to create "an irreversible situation."[66]

On August 2, 1971 Pompidou gave the bulldozers final approval and the physical destruction of the Baltard pavilions began. The fact that destruction came in August is of no surprise. Many Parisians had left the capital to begin their August holiday, including many of the protestors, and they were all shocked at what had happened in their absence. By waiting until the August vacation period, officials knew they could minimize outside interference and create the irreversible situation they desired. The reaction was brutal. Some onlookers cried, "they (the Gaullists) killed the pavilions," while Andre Fermigier wrote in the *Nouvel Observateur* of the "heart-rending sight, (by a) disgrace of a regime."[67] Other critics considered the damage done to Paris irreparable and fatal, using language like "massacre" and the "murder of Paris."[68] Whatever new life was beginning to emerge in the pavilions had been put to death while still in its infancy, and with it (so Pompidou likely hoped) was any remaining remnant of the spirit of 1968. The bulldozers claimed more than just the marketplace; along with the pavilions another fifty-six buildings were destroyed, some among the oldest remaining buildings in Paris at the time. The second battle over Les Halles was now complete, and just as before, Gaullist urbanism had emerged victorious.

The pavilions' destruction left a large hole in the center of Paris. Preservationists like Louis Chevalier were quick to make the connection that there was a hole in "the heart of Paris," and that the city needed to be mended. The issue of how to mend Paris and what to replace the pavilions with was now center stage and brought a general sense of uneasiness to many preservationists. This was with good reason. Gaullist urbanism had several projects that were either planned, in construction, or had just been constructed in 1973. A series of concrete apartment towers had just been constructed on the Front de Seine and in the Place d'Italie, in addition to the Tour Montparnasse, an office skyscraper stretching 690 feet built not far from the Luxembourg Gardens.[69] When it was constructed, Montparnasse was the tallest building in Europe and drew severe criticism as an intrusion to the view of Paris' more traditional monuments. Also in the final planning stages was the Left-Bank Expressway, Pompidou's pet project, which was to be a multi-lane highway that was to cut through the center of Paris by running along the Seine in the shadows of the Notre Dame. Such

projects, in light of Les Halles's recent destruction, left preservationists and the neighborhood associations galvanized for action.

After the marketplace was cleared, political gridlocked ensued. In April 1974, Pompidou died suddenly in office. Pompidou's death would be of great consequence to Parisian urban renewal projects, as his successor, Valery Giscard d'Estaing (while on the political right) was not a Gaullist in the traditional sense and had a different vision for the future of Paris than Pompidou. Immediately plans for the Left-Bank Expressway were scrapped, as was the international trade center. Height restrictions were placed on new construction in La Defense, and Giscard made known his preference for a traditional French garden on the surface level of the Les Halles site. Giscard announced he would shift his focus from commercialism to "*la qualité de la vie,*" a return to a more "French" way of being. Whether Giscard truly believed in such an ideological shift or whether it was one of necessity is to be debated. This new emphasis on quality of life followed a sudden lack of available financing for the planned commercial center in Les Halles.[70]

Giscard was not the only voice directing the course of events in Paris or what was in store for Les Halles. Jacques Chirac, who was Prime Minister under Giscard and later became the first mayor of Paris in 1977, was a rival of Giscard's and supported the use of Les Halles as a commercial center. Although Chirac's vision for Les Halles differed from Giscard's, he did not support the type of international urbanism that was popular under Pompidou. Chirac used Les Halles to position himself as a voice for the people and argued that building a shopping mall, such as the proposed Forum, would create a space useable for all much like the old Les Halles. In line with his populist rhetoric, Chirac claimed that Les Halles should "smell of French fries."[71] By the late 1970s, it had become clear that the urbanism of Pompidou was no longer in vogue. Vast amounts of office space in the towers of La Defense sat empty and nearly all of France was now in agreement that tall buildings of any sort would not be appropriate for Les Halles. In 1977, as Chirac was elected mayor, Giscard backed down in the Les Halles debate and Chirac's vision of the Forum shopping mall was built to fill the hole in Paris's heart. The Forum likely was well-intentioned and included space for cultural and recreational amenities, six movie theaters, 250 stores, and a FNAC as the anchor store.[72] Among the cultural amenities was a branch location of

the Grevin wax museum, which featured reproductions of several famous Bell Époque figures in a possible attempt to connect the space back to its glorious past.

Despite all of the amenities and the fact that the Forum became the largest grossing retail center in all of France, many lovers of Paris, cultural critics, and large numbers of the preservationists deemed the Forum a complete failure. In fact, the Forum des Halles has been included in the Project for Public Space's "Hall of Shame" as one of the worst architectural and park developments anywhere in the world. According to the Project:

Forum des Halles is essentially a subterranean mall; it completely disorients you from the real city on the surface. To experience a city is to be aware of one place flowing into another, to encounter a staggering variety of stimuli continually flowing all around you. But traversing Forum des Halles is a deadening experience; every time through we have been gripped by the urge to leave as quickly as possible.

It is covered aboveground by a park that no one ever seems to visit, consisting of a fussy, unconnected set of elements. We encountered the ultimate sign of a failed space at one of the entranceways, where we found some of the most overt drug-dealing we have ever witnessed in Paris.[73]

This sentiment has been echoed by numerous other newspapers and books. The site's constant criticism led to the announcement in 2004 of Les Halles' planned renovation. A concise summary of Les Halles' life, death, and resurrection appeared in the *New York Review of Books*:

Les Halles had been a vital connection to the cycle of nature, a living embodiment of the chain of production and consumption, a tremendous social equalizer, a place where the jobless could always find pickup work and the hungry could scrounge for discarded but perfectly acceptable food, a hub with its own culture and customs varnished by nearly a millennium of use. It was often called the "soul" of Paris as well as its "stomach," and it was destroyed impersonally, by administrative decree, and eventually replaced by a nightmarish pit of a shopping mall that appears to have been designed for maximum alienation.[74]

A nightmare may be an accurate depiction of Les Halles after its destruction. When the Gaullists had first begun making plans for Les Halles in the 1950s, they had hoped to eradicate the problems of prostitution and other vices, as well as create a space that would bring new life into the center of Paris and position France as a commercial destination for the new century. It seems they fell short. Ironically, after the development was completed, the park above the shopping complex became (once again) a center for prostitution and drug exchange. Many of the impoverished ethnic youths who had been exiled to the outskirts of Paris during the destruction of the Les Halles neighborhood have continued to use Les Halles as a place of refuge in the city.

What is the legacy of Les Halles? In a fourteen-page special report on the current state and future of France published in *The Economist*, there is a small feature on Paris, titled "Losing its sparkle, Paris is not what it was."[75] The article discusses how Paris, like France, is suffering from under-competiveness compared to many of its neighbors. As late as 1967, Paris was arguably still considered the financial capital of Europe. Evidence of this is seen in the fact that an American investment bank, Morgan Stanley, chose to open its first overseas office in Paris before London. Since then, the tables have turned and Paris now lags behind London, as well as other European cities, as a financial capital. Many have said London also has better restaurants, or that Milan now rivals Paris in fashion, and Berlin's art scene "has a buzz that Paris largely lacks." What has gone wrong? According to *The Economist*, "Paris, like France as a whole, prefers a culture of preservation to one of innovation. Cranes and new high-rise buildings are a perpetual feature of London, but are rare in Paris. Young people and immigrants, always a source of inventiveness and creativity, can no longer afford to live in or anywhere near the city's centre." Paris' present dilemma echoes its past; the battle between progress and tradition carries on.[76]

It has now been more than 40 years since the Baltard Pavilions were destroyed, cleared for what would become the much-maligned Forum shopping complex. The battle for Paris, however, continues to rage on. In October 2010, after eight years of debates, Paris major Bertrand Delanoë announced that Les Halles would once again go through another major renovation that offered to redefine the heart of Paris. [77] As the gentrification of Paris continues, many Parisians are

wondering if their city is destined to become the exclusive playground of tourists and the wealthy. In the case of Les Halles, while remaining a popular stopping point for tourists, the planned gentrification of the neighborhood by Gaullist planners in the 1970s failed to materialize. While the Forum was supposed to bring new life to the center of Paris, the result was a series of chain stores and restaurants, and the return of the immigrant youth (many descendants from those exiled from the neighborhood to build the Forum) who now sell drugs and engage in petty crime around the mall.

Anne Hidalgo, Delanoë's urban planning chief and the deputy mayor of Paris, echoed the enthusiasm of some of her earlier predecessors, when she stated, "For Les Halles, this is the beginning of a new chapter. In touching Les Halles you stir up everything—you stir up history, you stir up the beating heart of the metropolis."[78] Of course, Parisians have heard this before, though Hidalgo hopes the renovation will correct the mistakes of the Forum. Yet, much of the rhetoric of the renovation remains similar to that from the Forum project. As the redevelopment brochure states, "with Les Halles—destined to become the heart of a great metropolis, reflecting the vibrancy and excitement of the French capital—the Paris of tomorrow is taking shape."[79]

Why is the study of Les Halles important and what does it teach us? The story of Les Halles' plight during the second half of the twentieth century is important because it can serve as a microcosm of the French experience during the same period. Les Halles is particularly instructive of French struggles with the postwar modernization process. Foremost among those struggles was how to balance the kind of postwar modernization that an increasingly integrated world demanded (exemplified by the United States), while maintaining traditional notions of "Frenchness." As was evident from the writings of Fermigier, many preservationists equated modernizing with "Manhattanization"—something that was not French at all. Of course, as the Gaullists countered, "one must live in one's own time;" despite the preservationists' concerns, doing so did not necessarily require turning Paris into New York. The threat to Paris's architectural identity was real however, as the loss of the Baltard pavilions proves. Fermigier was right in many regards. Surely many Parisians regret the loss of Les Halles'

curving iron arcs, but Les Halles may show us that "Frenchness" is more than beauty and attention to aesthetics.

Les Halles' greatest lesson likely lies in how it captured the developing class divisions of the postwar era. As Kristin Ross argues, "the ten year period of the mid 1950s to the mid 1960s in France saw both the end of the empire and a surge in French consumption and modernization."[80] Ross states that during this time France was increasingly pushed towards middle-classness. Prior to the wars, much of France was tied to rural or working-class occupations. In the aftermath of the wars, as the ranks of the middle-class grew, the need for urban space geared toward middle-class interests increased. What had been a France that was somewhat united, at least in its shared poor economic status, had now become more divided. Both the working-class and the middle-class needed space, and Les Halles, located in the center of Paris, became an obvious choice.

The way the battle over who controlled this space was decided was not only instructive of changes taking place in France, but in the Western world at large. A common theme of the postwar world was the erosion of the working-class and the emergence of the middle-class as a center of political influence.[81] These themes, as well as that of converting urban space to middle-class needs, can be found in both the loss of the Baltard pavilions and the current redevelopment of the Forum. The lesson Les Halles provided in 1971 is that when a divided polity fails to work together on an important social issue the result can be a large hole in the heart of Paris, bandaged by the Forum, a failed development in which no one could claim victory. In other words, increasing class disunity is dangerous. In the current Forum redevelopment, Parisian officials and developers have taken greater care in communicating with the public and working with the community to find solutions that cater to a wide variety of citizens. Certainly this project has its detractors, but more so than in 1971, finding consensus has been a sought after goal. Nevertheless, a lesson that remains to be learned is whether or not the present Les Halles can become an example of how to bring a community together.

[1] Toni Howard "The Best Show in Paris is Free," *The Saturday Evening Post*, September 20, 1958, 44.

[2] See *Le Ventre de Paris* ("The Belly of Paris"), published in 1873. It was Zola's first novel about the working class and the third novel of his twenty-volume series *Les Rougen-Macquart.*

[3] These include the Tour Montparnasse, La Défense, and the HLM housing complexes in the Parisian suburbs.

[4] Rosemary Wakeman, "Fascinating Les Halles," *French Politics, Culture & Society* 2 (Summer 2007): 46.

[5] Anne Lombard-Jourdan, *Les Halles de Paris et Leur Quartier, 1137-1969* (Paris: Ecole Nationale des Chartes, 2009).

[6] Norma Evenson, "The Assassination of Les Halles," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 32 (1973), 308.

[7] Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France, Politics, Psychology, and Style* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 2-3.

[8] Pierre-François Large, *Des Halles au Forum* (Paris: Èdition l'Harmattan, 1992), 53.

[9] "Les Halles: Les etudes de restauration-rehabilitation," Paris Projet (Paris: l'Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme, no.1, July 1969), 35.

[10] Louis Chevalier*, The Assassination of Paris*, ed. trans. David Jordan (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994), 19.

[11] Evenson, "The Assassination of Les Halles," 311.

[12] Wakeman, "Fascinating Les Halles," 53.

[13] Philip Nord, *France's New Deal, From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 1-4.

[14] Jordan, ed., Chevalier, *The Assassination of Paris*, 97.

[15] I should acknowledge the potential problems in using the term "Gaullist" as a consistent and all-encompassing term, as the "Gaullist" vision was different (nuanced) under de Gaulle, Pompidou and Chirac. Also, Giscard d'Estaing was at best a pseudo-Gaullist and broke with the party coalition in 1962. However, as a general idea, Gaullist politics

during the 1960s fairly consistently followed technocratic guidelines and the principles of state-controlled planning first put into action by De Gaulle in his first administration.

[16] Philip Nord, *France's New Deal, From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 145-213.

[17] *Ibid.*, 146.

[18] Rosemary Wakeman, "Fascinating Les Halles," *French Politics, Culture, & Society* 25 (Summer 2007), 55.

[19] *Ibid.*, 56.

[20] *Ibid.*, 55.

[21] Roger Zetter, "Les Halles: A Case Study of Large Scale redevelopment in Central Paris," *Town Planning Review* (July, 1975), 273.

[22] Zetter, "Les Halles," 274.

[23] Such collaboration between government and the private sector is also echoed by W. Brian Newsome in his article "The Rise of the Grands Ensembles: Government, Business, and Housing in Postwar France," *The Historian* (Winter, 2004). Newsome also writes of the collaboration between engineers in government agencies and the private sector, as well as how companies once responsible for the construction of roads and bridges turned to the lucrative market for public housing, creating structures that satisfied the mechanical and social visions of technocrats rather than the human needs of French families.

[24] Zetter, "Les Halles," 271.

[25] Evenson, "The Assassination of Les Halles," 312.

[26] "Les Halles: Les études de restauration-réhabilitation," *Paris projet* (Paris: l'Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme, no.1, July 1969), 35.

[27] Rearick, *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories*, 109.

[28] See footnote 33.

[29] Mémorandum, Préfecture de Police, Archives de Paris, file number 101/77/10, boxes 1-6.

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] Undated transcript, Archives de Paris. See archive file number 101/77/10, boxes 1-6.

[34] Diebolt resigned his position as Préfet of Paris within two months after the bulldozers destroyed the marketplace to become the Chairman of the building company Société Auxiliaire de la Construction Immobilière (SACI) and Director of the Banque pour la Construction et l'équipment. See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy*(Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 104.

[35] Undated transcript, Archives de Paris. See archive file number 101/77/10, boxes 1-6.

[36] *Ibid*

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] Undated transcript, Archives de Paris. See archive file number 101/77/10, boxes 1-6.

[39] "Exposé Prononcé à l'Occasion de l'Ouverture du Colloque Consacré à l'Aménagement des Halles," undated document, Archives de Paris, file number 101/77/10, boxes 1-6.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] "Nero, Sixtus V and Napoleon did not have to make choices more essential than those that will be made tomorrow at Les Halles." Translation is mine.

[42] André Fermigier, *La Bataille de Paris* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 35. This is a collection of Fermigier's writings published after his death in 1988.

[43] *Ibid.*, 46.

[44] *Ibid.*

[45] Wakeman, "Fascinating Les Halles," 56. André Malraux was a French novelist and the Minister of Cultural Affairs under Charles de Gaulle's presidency. Malraux was given large amounts of power and discretion by de Gaulle on all matters relating to Paris. Malraux, supported by de Gaulle, wanted to use the Les Halles area to build large towers to be used for the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Culture, a bureaucratic Versailles in the center of Paris.

[46] A collection of all newspaper articles written about Les Halles can be found in the Paris Police Department's "Dossier Police," which also included memos and maps related to the Les Halles debate and how the police department meant to keep order during the protests. These materials can be found at Les Archives de la Préfecture de Police—Préfecture de Police de Paris.

[47] The hole, dubbed *le trou des Halles*, (*trou* is "hole" in French) became a sensitive eyesore and the filming site of a 1974 artistic film, "*Touche pas à le femme blanche*" ("Don't Touch the White Woman"), that can be viewed as symbolizing the tensions present in Les Halles' destruction and larger class tensions in France as a whole. The film is an interpretation of Custer's Last Stand, and the Battle of Little Bighorn is filmed inside the hole where the Les Halles marketplace had stood. The battle between the soldiers and the Indians is one in which the soldiers attempt to take the homes of the Indians, symbolic of the Gaullists taking the homes of the working class in Les Halles.

[48] Until its destruction, Les Halles was, along with the Latin Quarter, one of the only parts of Paris to have maintained its same function continuously since its initial settlement in 1137.

[49] Lefebvre quoted in Peter Muir, "Gordon Matta-Clark's Conical Intersect: 'Luxury will be king,'" *Journal for Cultural Research* 15 (April 2011): 177.

[50] Muir, "Gordon Matta-Clark's Conical Intersect," 178.

[51] Raymond Aron, *La Révolution introuvable* (Paris: Fayard, 1968), 129-130.

[52] As Pierre Schneider said in the *New York Times*, "Paris: Timely Requiem for Les Halles," May 25, 1970, "... for so large an area in the heart

of Paris has not been and may not be available again for centuries."

[53] The following discussion of the events of May 1968 is a summary of Bernard Brown, *Protest in Paris: Anatomy of a Revolt* (Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, 1974).

[54] *Ibid.*, 12.

[55] *Ibid.*, 31.

[56] "Manhattanization" became a popular term of comparison for any of the construction projects in Paris during the 1960s and 1970s that involved skyscrapers. In the article "Skyline of Paris to Get New Look," *New York Times*, June 18, 1967, John Hess wrote "Nearly all the architects (for Les Halles project) have agreed that to fit all the required construction into 80 acres of space will call for skyscrapers of double or triple the height of the nearby towers of Notre Dame, St. Eustache and St. Jacques." Likewise, "Paris in the Sky," *New York Times*, November 23, 1972, is written like a poem that laments, "The Manhattanization of Paris has its admirers … but Paris is a civilized work of art turning into a catastrophe."

[57] As Charles Rearick notes, "By the mid-1970s some of the new towers rising at La Défense were three to four times bigger than the early ones … Responding defiantly to critics of the new Manhattan visible from central Paris, President Pompidou (in an interview with *Le Monde)* called for 'a forest of towers'—not just a timid five or six—as a backdrop to the Arc de Triomphe. See Charles Rearick, *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories, The City and Its Mystique* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011) 89.

[58] André Fermigier, "Qui a vendu les Halles?" *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 12 July 1971, 12.

[59] Michael Spingler, "Where Les Halles Stood, Alphaville is Coming," *The Village Voice*, December 9, 1971.

[60] Andre Fermigier, *"*La mort de Paris II, Le secret d'un secret*," Le Nouvel Observateur*, May 24, 1967.

[61] Large, *Des Halles au Forum*, 55.

[62] *L'Idiot international*, June 30, 1971.

[63] For similar articles, see *Combat*, July 20, 1971, *L'Aurora*, July 16, 1971, as well as *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*.

[64] Bertrand Lemoine, *Les Halles de Paris* (Paris: l'Équerre, 1980), 219.

[65] Spingler, "Where Les Halles Stood, Alphaville is Coming," *The Village Voice*, December 9, 1971.

[66] Rearick, *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories*, 106.

[67] Andre Fermigier, "Des Maisons qui avouent," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, September 6, 1971.

[68] Louis Chevalier, *The Assassination of Paris*, trans. David Jordan (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994) 235, 265.

[69] Rearick, *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories*, 108.

[70] "At the Barricades," *New York Times*, September 18, 1974, 40.

[71] Rearick, *Paris Dreams, Paris Memories*, 115.

[72] FNAC is a national chain retailer in France, specializing in books, electronics, and some home goods.

[73] "Hall of Shame," Project for Public Spaces, http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=725, accessed April 3, 2013.

[74] "In Search of Lost Paris," *The New York Review of Books*, December 15, 2010.

[75] "Special Report: France, So much to do, so little time," *The Economist,* November 17, 2012.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] Jeffrey Iverson, "Paris Finally Gives Les Halles a Facelift," *Time*, (October 19, 2010), http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2026326,00.html, accessed April 17, 2013.

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] *Les Halles Redevelopment Project* (Paris: Parimage, 2011).

[80] Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies, Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 77.

[81] See Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (1996; reprinted Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), Arnold Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), and Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Priceton University Press, 2001).

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