

Sharing Paris:
The Use and Ownership of a Neighborhood, Its Streets
and Public Spaces, 1950-2012

By

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines a lively lower-middle-class, immigrant neighborhood in the 10th arrondissement of Paris, the Faubourg Saint-Denis, from 1950 into the twenty-first century, and explores the history of everyday life in its streets and public spaces. It connects the neighborhood's evolution to larger changes in urban redevelopment policies and municipal politics in Paris. This study challenges a core assumption held by scholars about urban neighborhoods: that everyday life and communities are shaped primarily by residents.

Residents have historically been the focus of neighborhood scholarship because they are easily accessible to scholars in most archival sources and because they have been viewed as the stabilizing force that keeps chaotic cities civilized. Since the 1950s and even during the nineteenth-century, however, non-residents have been found at the core of local communities in Paris, especially in its busiest neighborhoods. These parts of the city, often centered around marketplaces and market streets, such as Les Halles, have remained vibrant due to the important role played by non-residents, many of whom have commuted long distances to them every day not only to work, but also to shop, and to socialize. Scholars, however, have neglected their important role in shaping community life in cities.

This dissertation is about these everyday users of Paris's city center and its vibrant neighborhoods, many of whom have contributed to the life of a neighborhood far from where they sleep. These users do not leave many traces of their impact, though through the examination of a wide variety of sources, including tax records, television news reports, police records, classified ads, transportation statistics, and oral interviews, it is possible to find hints of their significant presence. Daily mobility in Paris has been crucial to the creation of community life.

With the rise of municipal democracy in Paris since 1977 and increasing political decentralization across France since the mid-1980s, residents in Paris have gained significant new power in shaping the outcome of their neighborhood's public space by working with their

local government. As these residents have increasingly become homeowners, often taking out expensive mortgages for their apartments, they have sought to use their lobbying and voting power to shape public space to cater more to their desires. Although many of these residents who moved to the Faubourg Saint-Denis between 1998 and 2012—a period of gentrification and a substantial rise in real estate prices in Paris—chose it because they liked its diversity and energy, their actions to make their neighborhood more green, livable, and pedestrian-friendly have often unwittingly worked against their desire to live in a vibrant area of the city. Despite this pressure to quiet the neighborhood's public spaces, the Faubourg Saint-Denis has remained the daytime or nighttime home of its non-resident users who generally live in suburbs of Paris, where housing is more affordable and life is calmer. The city center of Paris continues to function as it has since the nineteenth century, animated and invigorated every day by people who live far from it.

*To Susanna and to the entire community at La Ferme,
without whom this project could not have happened
and would surely not have been as much fun*

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	1
Preamble	17
Chapter 1: Rhythms, pt. 1: Residents and the Private Spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1960	34
Chapter 2: Rhythms, pt. 2: Non-Residents and the Public Spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1960	63
Chapter 3: Collapse: How Paris Lost Its Faith in Urban Redevelopment, 1969-1971	103
Chapter 4: Passages: The Rise of Preservationism and the Remaking of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1974-1998	133
Chapter 5: Cadences: The Separating Visions of Public Space in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1998-2012	173
Epilogue	213
Bibliography	220

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Introduction

“Nobody ever goes there anymore. It’s too crowded.”

– Yogi Berra

Paris, like most big cities built before the twentieth century, lives on its streets. They hum and crackle from the chit-chat of café-goers and chain smokers, from honking horns, groaning garbage trucks, and muffler-impaired motorcycles. It is here, on its streets and in its stores, cafés, and other public spaces, that the city’s distinctive characteristics come to life. The countless transactions, conversations, and encounters that occur there every day make life in the city meaningful to its people.

People generally think of Paris’s dense streets, elegant old buildings, and small storefronts as particularly animated, filled with the buzz of a big city. Since the 1960s, however, many parts of Paris have lost this energy and have seen their street life curtailed. At the same time, others retained their vitality. Looking at Paris from the end of World War II until the beginning of the twenty-first century, the story that follows examines how people used these vibrant public spaces and how some groups attempted to quiet them.

Who were the users of these spaces and why did these parts of the city remain attractive to them? Answering this question is more complicated than one might first imagine, as these users generally elude the historian—they are a much more diverse, itinerant group than local residents, who leave abundant traces of their presence. Often neglected by scholars, these people who use public spaces far from where they live are crucial to how cities function. Though they do not live in these spaces, they often give them life. This is a story not only about Paris in the recent past, but also about the shared places in every city whose streets are filled every day with the complexity of urban life.

Neighborhoods matter. Seemingly everyone—residents, politicians, real estate agents, business owners, journalists, and tourists—makes sense of cities by dividing them into neighborhoods. It is at this micro-level that people locate themselves in a city, as even small cities are too large and diverse to visualize as a complete whole.

The neighborhood is our common means of distinguishing the parts of a city and making it comprehensible. After receiving a quizzical look when we tell others the precise location of where we are going or where we live, we rely on the name of a neighborhood to make ourselves clear. Without neighborhoods, a city would appear to be an overwhelming, disorganized mess of streets, buildings, and people.

In one sense, this is obvious. Cities have always had and will always have neighborhoods. What has changed, however, is the significance that people place on these imagined divisions of

space.¹ After much neglect and destruction in the name of progress and development, we have come to appreciate and, often, idealize them. It is this newfound love of the neighborhood and life within it—after decades of people all around the world wanting to leave them for calmer, greener suburbs—that has inspired the great period of urban gentrification that began in the 1990s.²

In the years that have followed, prices of urban real estate across the world—apartments, houses, shops, warehouses, artists’ studios, and street vendors’ stands—either rented or owned, have increased many times over. Despite the global economic downturn since 2008, which has severely affected suburbs and smaller cities, real estate at the centers of a number of the world’s biggest, most desirable cities is more expensive at the end of 2012 than ever before.³ Demand has never been higher. As prices have risen, vast swaths of cities have undergone dramatic changes as new types of businesses and residents have capitalized on quickly changing circumstances. Neighborhood boundaries have been redrawn and, in some cases, invented, to add value to properties that had previously been located in less desirable neighborhoods. In this way, neighborhoods can be consumed, and the market for them has never been hotter. The difference, for example, of listing an apartment in lower Manhattan as being situated in fashionable NoLiTa versus Chinatown can mean tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of dollars. The monetary value the real estate market puts on neighborhood is high in New York, Paris, and many other wealthy cities worldwide.

After decades in which wealthy and middle-class people preferred to live in suburbs, this move back to the city could not have been foretold. In returning to the urban environment, people have been willing to pay more to live in smaller homes, often with fewer amenities than they had when they lived in suburban homes. Even in the most fashionable, recently gentrified neighborhoods residents are met with higher taxes, more noise, dirtier air, less green space, and fewer good public schools than in many less expensive and chic suburbs.

One could not have predicted this newfound appreciation of the urban. While there were some structural reasons for this change, such as reduced crime and lower relative real estate prices in cities, these do not explain why people *liked* cities more. One cannot explain these changes simply by economics. Although some people have reduced living costs after a move to a city by selling their cars or consuming less energy at home, the costs of most goods and services in

¹ Throughout this book, unless noted otherwise, I will be using an open definition of neighborhoods, one which recognizes each individual’s different understanding of how the space of the city is divided and labeled. While there are often official administrative divisions of neighborhoods, when I speak of a neighborhood I am referring to a generally understood, yet ultimately flexible definition of a place. That is not to neglect the importance of history and physical geography in shaping these divisions, as topography, transport infrastructure, and various types of past social and ethnic segregation frequently play a significant role in defining these spaces. An open approach has been used by many scholars, such as George Chauncey in his study on gay neighborhoods in Manhattan in the first half of the twentieth century, *Gay New York*. See George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

² For a well-rounded introduction to the literature on urban gentrification, see Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

³ Both Paris and London, for example, have reached their all-time highs for residential property prices in 2012.

the city are in fact higher. Despite this, some people have been more willing than ever before to spend a high percentage of their income to live in cities. In Paris, for example, the cost of apartments relative to per capita income increased almost fourfold between 1998 and 2012. While property costs rose everywhere in France during the same period, the increase in prices in Paris was 50 percent greater than in the rest of the country, despite average salaries in Paris growing modestly.⁴ Without much forewarning, the city has quickly become an attractive place to live.

The story of Paris during this era of urban transformation is a chapter in the broader history of large, wealthy cities around the world. At the moment this narrative begins, sometime in the 1950s, those involved in the planning and development of Paris believed that its streets were in trouble.⁵ With the spread of the automobile in all of its forms—cars, buses, motorcycles, and trucks—streets had become too polluted, noisy, crowded, dangerous, and uncomfortable for their users.

Parisian streets, the majority of them narrow, had been built in a different era for a different type of city, one of pedestrians, horses, and the vehicles they pulled. Consistent attempts since the 1830s to widen the city's thoroughfares—many of them quite successful and well-known to urban planners—had not done enough to prepare Paris for the age of the automobile. In order to alleviate the traffic problems in the capital, the national government actively supported and funded transportation projects in Paris. From the 1950s until the death of the pro-automobile French president, Georges Pompidou, in 1973, the government built new express roads in the city center and a high-speed ring road, the *Péripherique*, around the city's edges.

These efforts garnered widespread condemnation as well as great acclaim. The detractors were angered not only by the destruction of buildings and neighborhoods, but also because the new roads made driving in Paris too convenient. As more cars came to Paris due to the staggering growth of the suburbs and inadequate public transportation options, many of the busiest narrow streets in the center of the city remained congested despite the expansion of the city's roadways. The outer areas of Paris in the 12th through 20th arrondissements, however, were radically rebuilt and became much calmer due to these development projects.⁶ With thousands of new high-rise

⁴ See Jacques Friggit, "De Philippe Auguste à François Hollande, le prix des logements à Paris sur huit siècles," *Variances, revue de l'association des anciens élèves de l'Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique*, no. 45 (September 2012), <http://www.cgedd.fr/auguste-hollande-prix-immobilier-paris.pdf>.

⁵ When I discuss "the world of urban planning," "urban planners," and "planners," I am referring to this field in loose terms. They are meant to include not only professional urban planners, but all people involved in the future development of cities, such as scholars, government officials, transportation executives, and real estate developers.

⁶ Paris has twenty arrondissements, or districts, that function principally as administrative divisions. Each has its own mayor's office, or *mairie*, which has historically had limited control over its jurisdiction, sharing power with the city as a whole, the department (which can function both like an American county and a state), the region (since its institution as another level of jurisdiction in 1964), and the national government. While each arrondissement has

apartment buildings, often constructed as part of larger complexes with parking lots and open green spaces, these areas on the edges of the city began to resemble modern-day suburbs. For most of central Paris's most vibrant neighborhoods and streets, however, the arrival of the automobile did not usher in a new urban era at all. While there may have been more automobiles on the streets in 1965 than in 1940, the city center's economy and street life remained essentially unchanged. It was not until the 1970s that the streets of central Paris—the Paris that most tourists know well—began to change.⁷

By the early 1970s, much of central Paris's economy had been gutted. Older manufacturing businesses, once the core of the Parisian economy, had closed down or had moved outside of the city, sometimes quite far away. This story is similar to that of most developed cities during the post-war era: the beginning of a globalizing economy, coupled with cheap and efficient highway transport, made it impractical to keep big industrial and manufacturing businesses in the city. Labor, storage, and property costs were too high and transporting goods in and out of crowded city centers was time-consuming and inefficient. The departure of these industries to the Paris suburbs began around 1960 as the French economy modernized. It quickened with the economic downturn in 1970 and accelerated even further with the shock of the 1973 oil crisis.

The French government promoted this exodus not only by building new roads, but also by doing what it could to move important infrastructure to the suburbs. In 1971, the national government transplanted Les Halles, the city's major wholesale food market, from the heart of the city to the south of the city. For many Parisians, the removal of Les Halles was unimaginable. The market, residing in the same place since the Middle Ages, was a monument to the city not only for the architecture of its nineteenth-century pavilions of iron and glass, but for the all-hours eating, drinking, and socializing that took place in the cafés and streets of its neighborhood. The removal of the market and the destruction of its beloved pavilions, however, were more than symbolically important. In a moment when the city center's manufacturing economy was already fragile, the market's departure closed many businesses that served it, shuttered many storefronts, and deflated real estate prices in its surrounding area. Without the daily visitors who had come to Les Halles to work at the market or to delight in its spectacle, the area's retail shops and eating establishments were left vacant.

ever-changing cultural meanings—the 7th, 8th, and 16th as places for the rich, for example—each one's multiple neighborhoods have their own equally important personalities and stereotypes.

⁷ The impact of the May 1968 strikes and revolt should not be overstated. The events transformed, at least temporarily, Parisians' relationship with the French state and empowered an entire generation of youth to believe that they could change their city and country. They did not, however, create significant lasting change to everyday life or the economic and social structures in the city center's neighborhoods. For more on how the memory of the 1968 revolt influenced a future generation's thought, see Kristin Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). For a study critical of the impact of the events of May 1968 on France and its development, see Michael Seidman, *The Imaginary Revolution: Parisian Students and Workers in 1968* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004).

The transformation turned the Les Halles neighborhood into a construction site for over a decade. An enormous ditch—called *Le Grand Trou*, or “The Big Hole,” by Parisians—was all that remained of the old markets throughout the 1970s. Just to the east, an entire neighborhood of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings, called Beaubourg, was razed in order to make way for the enormous new national museum of modern art, the Centre Georges Pompidou. Underneath Les Halles, the government began construction on the central node of a rail network to connect the suburbs to the city center. In order to build the RER, the Réseau Express Régional (Regional Express Network), entire streets were closed through the 1980s as the tunneling machines pushed their way through layers of sedimentary rock.⁸ If people did not see or hear the work, they often smelled it—Parisians complained of the horrible odors emanating from the ground.

Parisians anger about these controversial changes to the fabric of the city center led them to embrace a nascent preservationist movement.⁹ They wanted their government and real estate developers to stop tampering with the buildings that remained standing in the city center. French President Valéry Giscard-d’Estaing, as soon as he was elected in 1974, reformed the national government’s stance on development in Paris, stopping some of Pompidou’s most invasive projects.¹⁰ At the regional and local levels, the government embraced Giscard-d’Estaing’s vision of preservation, protecting older buildings at a vastly accelerated rate while also pushing a new regulatory system of building permits to prevent unwanted changes to structures across the city. The restoration of buildings’ interiors also accelerated, with many apartments receiving modern amenities like toilets and showers for the first time. This vision of a Paris city center filled with old, renovated buildings would soon be accepted as the norm by politicians and the population alike, a significant change from the futuristic vision that had previously dominated the public discourse.¹¹

At the same time that preservationism took root in Paris, new communities established themselves in the city center, where they took advantage of large-scale vacancies and cheap rents to open businesses and, less frequently, to rent apartments. As soon as the Les Halles pavilions were dismantled, a group of young French clothing designers and antique vendors moved into storefronts in the area, together creating a vibrant new culture in the wreckage of the market.

⁸ On the establishment of the RER, see “Le RER : la seconde naissance d’une région,” Simon Texier, *Paris contemporain : Architecture et urbanisme de Haussmann à nos jours, une capitale à l’ère des métropoles* (Paris: Parigramme, 2005), 170–171.

⁹ For more on the large-scale demolitions in Paris and the attempts to prevent these developments, see Claude Eveno and Pascale de Mezamat, eds., *Paris perdu : quarante ans de bouleversement de la ville* (Paris: Editions Carré, 1991).

¹⁰ For a summary of the urban planning changes brought on by Giscard-d’Estaing, see “Retrouver Paris, 1974-1983,” Texier, *Paris contemporain*, 180–181.

¹¹ Numerous examples of this futuristic vision of Paris held at the time are discussed in a special issue of *L’Architecture française* on contemporary Paris architecture and large-scale urban planning projects: “Paris,” *L’Architecture française*, July 1973. For a study on the avant-garde architects and urban planners who designed these projects and their utopian ideas, see Larry Busbea, *Topologies: The Urban Utopia in France, 1960-1970* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2007).

Most of the groups, however, that moved to the city center in the 1970s and 1980s were immigrants. They tended to use these neighborhoods as commercial and cultural hubs, not as residential enclaves. Each neighborhood provided a conveniently located place for community members, who lived in a wide variety of neighborhoods and towns throughout Paris and its suburbs, to meet and conduct business. Establishing themselves near these old centers of economic activity was convenient and calculated, as these locations gave newcomers an easy point of entry into the Parisian economy. A Congolese community, for example, took root in the République area and near the Château-Rouge metro station, while the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood in the 10th arrondissement saw the arrival of Greek, Yugoslav, and Polish businesses.¹² The flexible work still found in these neighborhoods in retail shops as well as clothing production, printing, and other manufacturing industries (much of it off the books as many of the immigrants did not have working papers) provided these groups many opportunities where others saw decline.

This is a rather typical story of urban evolution. One group leaves and another arrives, sometimes performing the same work as the first, sometimes innovating and creating new ways of making money. What is surprising in this period from the mid-1970s through the beginning of the twenty-first century is that, despite the vast technological and economic changes that occurred in France and Paris proper, retail business in certain areas of Paris's center remained more or less unchanged. This was especially the case on and around market streets, where shops, restaurants, and cafés continued to attract enough customers to remain in business despite the difficulties with which many retail businesses faced. Immigrants not only integrated into the Parisian economy, but they also frequently preserved it and the cultures built around it.

The parts of Paris whose public spaces remained packed with people in 2012, that make someone standing on their streets at once feel like they are in a city and also in a neighborhood—not on a major thoroughfare—have remained busy thanks to the communities that use them every day. The flexibility of the spaces of these neighborhoods has kept them vibrant. Their retail, workshop, and office spaces have been cheap and inviting enough to continue to attract newcomers to set up shop and try their hand at making a living in Paris. Equally important, the offerings provided by these shopkeepers and café owners have been attractive enough to convince customers to continue to patronize them. These shopkeepers, their employees, and their customers—the people crucial to keeping these streets animated—rarely live in the neighborhood where they work or spend most of their time. It may be their home in Paris, but their beds generally lie elsewhere.

¹² On the Congolese communities, see Justin-Daniel Gandoulou, *Entre Paris et Bacongo* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, Centre de création industrielle, 1984); Janet MacGaffey and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris: Transnational Traders on the Margins of Thelaw* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). For more on the Yugoslav community in France during the 1970s, see Mirjana Morokvasic-Müller, “Il était une fois une communauté des Yougoslaves en France,” in *Toute la France : Histoire de l’immigration en France au XXe siècle*, ed. Laurent Gervereau, Pierre Milza, and Emile Temime (Paris: Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine, 1998).

In the United States, Jane Jacobs's work convinced American urban planners of the importance of these people on the street, not only those residing inside buildings. Thinking about New York and its problems of crime and urban renewal in her influential book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Jacobs recognized that having "eyes upon the street" at all times of the day and night was crucial in maintaining desirable and successful urban space, whether they came from itinerant vendors, residents on their front stoops, café-goers, or homeless vendors.¹³ For her, emptiness, not poverty, was the biggest enemy of a neighborhood. Neighborhoods could remain alive socially and economically only if they opened themselves to the rest of the city, accepting people from all over to their establishments and public spaces.¹⁴ Neighborhoods were not meant to be "urban villages" intended for their residents, but rather busy, mixed places that could fulfill their role to provide "some means for civilized self-government" on the local level.¹⁵ The non-residents populating a healthy neighborhood's streets not only kept its businesses open, but made the public spaces of a neighborhood safe from insecurity by their presence.

The importance of non-residents in neighborhoods had been neglected before Jacobs because people viewed them as a threat to civic order in the city. Common practice for governments and planners had been to attempt to quiet urban public spaces, not promote activity in them. According to this view, overcrowding, noise, filth, drunkenness, poverty, and vagrant young men needed to be removed from public spaces to create a healthy urban life. Strong, closely-knit communities of residents, according to this view of neighborhoods, could defend against these dangers, which were thought to come principally from outsiders who polluted the public space.

American scholars have also examined social mobility and segregation through the lens of residence.¹⁶ Social success or failure has often been argued by showing households' relocation to

¹³ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), 35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Racial and class segregation has also been such an important political theme in American politics that it has pushed many scholars to examine neighborhoods through their residents. For a classic study of segregation, viewed through residence, see Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). See Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), Chapters 1-4, for a study of how contemporary American society viewed social status through the lens of housing. This focus has been determined by the type of data available to political scientists and sociologists, who have had access to information about the race and income of households, each located at a static address. Only with recent advances in data collection that can analyze people's movements through a city using "big data"—mobile telephone and credit card location records—have social scientists begun to examine spatial segregation beyond residence. For an introduction to the early research in this field, see Paul M. Torrens, "Geography and Computational Social Science," *GeoJournal* 75, no. 2 (2010): 136–137. For a study predating this new research that examined neighborhoods beyond residents and the complexity of people's movement within a city, see Kenneth A. Scherzer, *The Unbounded Community: Neighborhood Life and Social Structure in New York City, 1830–1875* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992).

wealthier or poorer accommodation. A neighborhood filled with cheap housing, for example, has often been viewed as undesirable. The ease of access of historians to information about residents and their housing costs has played a significant role in favoring residence as the crucial element in the study of neighborhoods. Lewis Mumford, perhaps the most read American author to write about cities, stated this viewpoint emphatically in 1968: “[N]eighbors are simply people who live near one another... [and] are people united primarily not by common origins or common purposes but by the proximity of their dwellings in space.”¹⁷ Neighborhood, for Mumford and for other scholars, is created by residents.¹⁸

Scholars influenced by Jacobs, including Mitchell Duneier, have recognized that non-residents are important to neighborhoods and their public spaces.¹⁹ They have often continued to focus on the issues of security and have examined the role of outsiders in maintaining order in a neighborhood and in protecting the other users of its public spaces.²⁰ In this focus on safety as well as urban inequality, scholars have often neglected the important social and economic roles of these non-residents, who often are key members of local communities through their participation in the everyday life in a neighborhood’s public spaces.

This book is about those people on the street, who have been there day in, day out, contributing to the life of a neighborhood without leaving many traces of their impact. These are some of the hardest people for historians to talk about, as they generally do not appear in the archival sources typically used to tell the story of neighborhoods in cities. I have chosen to call these people *quotidians* after the French word *quotidien*, almost the equivalent of the word “daily.” Like its English equivalent, *quotidien* is generally used as an adjective to describe repetitive activities that take place every day, but can also be used as a noun to describe a newspaper that is printed daily. Most importantly, the phrase *la vie quotidienne* is used to describe “everyday life” in French. While *quotidian* often has a negative meaning in English when it describes the commonplace and mundane, it is precisely this ordinariness that I seek to

¹⁷ Lewis Mumford, *The Urban Prospect* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), 59.

¹⁸ See, for example, the detailed ethnography of East Harlem told through the stories of its residents by Russell Leigh Sharman. From the beginning of his study, Sharman assumes that to tell the story of this neighborhood one must understand its residents. In this sense, his book is an examination of a community of residents, not of the public space of the neighborhood. Russell Leigh Sharman, *The Tenants of East Harlem* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Mitchell Duneier’s ethnographic study of African-American booksellers along the sidewalks of Sixth Avenue in New York’s Greenwich Village is an important example of this type of scholarship since Jane Jacobs. Studying the role of these figures in the daily life of the neighborhood during the late 1990s, Duneier shows how people who are not only mostly homeless, but who also sleep in other parts of the city and suburbs, can play a crucial role in keeping the streets of the neighborhood vibrant and safe. See Mitchell Duneier, *Sidewalk* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1999).

²⁰ In Duneier’s study, for example, he argues that the booksellers are especially important to Greenwich Village because of the added security they bring to its streets. They are its “eyes on the street.” *Ibid.*, 6–8.

highlight and value when using the term.²¹ Quotidians, as I define them, are the people who regularly spend time on a street, in a neighborhood, or in any division of public, shared space in a city but do not reside near it. While residents of a neighborhood can and often do spend their days in the neighborhood's public space and know it in the same way as quotidians, they do not commute. Commuting, in this sense, defines more than trips to work—one can have a daily commute only to socialize and to be part of a community, without a job to go along with it. To be a quotidian means to be a regular, whether one drinks a beer or coffee in a favorite café on most days or works in a store, greeting customers all day long, seven days a week, dislocated from one's place of residence.

Since the nineteenth century, quotidians who have regularly commuted to neighborhoods in Paris have been commonplace and played a vital role in the life of the city. They are often lost to history, however, as they rarely leave traces of their lives beyond the places where they resided. Because the most common sources used to tell histories of Parisian neighborhoods and streets are voting, church, and school registers, rental and property tax records, and birth, marriage, and death certificates, the information they yield is almost exclusively about residents. One can also learn about businesses through tax records and published directories, such as phone books, but these records do not reveal anything about their employees. One would rarely see the name of a café manager who lived outside of the neighborhood, even if he were one of the local community's most important figures.

Mobility has always been an important part of the life of Paris, which complicates a study of its users and public spaces. It does not arise only after the opening of new transportation systems—the metro or the RER in Paris's case—or the rise of a new type of transportation technology, like the automobile. These developments are crucial to the geography of cities and have made everyday movement and commuting over longer distances ever easier, but even before they existed, some people needed to move from where they lived to where they worked, shopped, and socialized. Tyler Stovall's study of Bobigny, a working-class suburb to the northeast of Paris, has shown that even at the beginning of the twentieth century, when there were poor transportation connections to the city center, residents of the town would walk thirty minutes through fields and across railroad tracks in order to get to the city every day.²² Convenient transportation options were not a necessary condition for daily mobility within the city. The

²¹ Henri Lefebvre uses the word *quotidienneté*, or everydayness, to describe “a social environment of sophisticated exploitation and carefully controlled passivity.” I have chosen to use the word in the opposite sense, implying the active everyday choices made by users of the city. I use the term “user” as Michel de Certeau does, highlighting the creative practices of people who use the spaces of the city, giving them new meaning through their use. This could come from crossing a street outside of the crosswalk and forcing a car to stop its movement or from choosing to smoke inside a café when it is forbidden. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 139–140; Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), xi–xvi.

²² See Tyler Stovall, *The Rise of the Paris Red Belt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

general thinking that daily movement within a city was at low levels before the subway, automobile, and suburban rail train may actually be false.

The market areas of Paris have especially been frequented by quotidian and other visitors since at least the nineteenth century. Markets and market streets—not only established ones, but also areas that attract a considerable number of people to shop—by their very nature cater to non-residents. Paris's city center, like that of many older, large cities, has abounded with market streets for centuries, whether they were filled with rotating, temporary food markets, chain department stores, or a dense mix of different types of businesses. The workers at Les Halles—many of whom came from the suburbs every day to go to work—were so well known for their commutes that the road that brought the fishmongers to and from the marketplace every day was named the rue des Poissonniers, or Fishmongers' Street. Since at least the fourteenth century, fishmongers took this path into the city in the early morning to bring fresh seafood caught off the northern coast of France.²³ The growth of the tourist industry in the city center since the 1960s has led to the establishment of retail shops, restaurants, and hotels that make many streets feel like shopping malls. All of these areas, by their very nature, economically thrive when they bring together sellers, workers, and customers from various locations—whether from other parts of the city, the suburbs, or the other side of the world—not only to trade, but also to socialize.

Sometimes historians have learned about a neighborhood's quotidian through more colorful sources like novels, memoirs, and newspaper articles. These can provide information about the role of quotidian in certain parts of the city, but contain a large amount of unreliable information. These sources tend to feature the most prominent people who lived in a neighborhood—its politicians and artists, generally—and the most important events that occurred on its streets and in its buildings, often during wars, revolutions, and protests.²⁴ Alternatively, they discuss all of the bad things that happen in neighborhoods—murders, drug dealing, prostitution—and emphasize crime and the underbelly of the city. Texts like these generally reveal more about the writers' tastes, fears, and biases than about what actually happened in a given place.²⁵ These embellished stories do not offer realistic and comprehensive portraits of everyday life.

By breaking from the assumption that neighborhood life in cities is limited to that of its residents, one can begin to find traces of these quotidian in the archives. The historical examination of a single neighborhood in Paris allows one to look very closely at its users—

²³ Jacques Hillairet, *Connaissance du Vieux Paris*, Nouvelle édition entièrement refondue. (Paris: Le Club Français du Livre, 1976), 578.

²⁴ The most significant book written on the public spaces of postwar Paris, for example, examines these spaces predominantly through protests and other unique, infrequent events. See Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

²⁵ See Alain Corbin's *Women for Hire* for a discussion of the limitations of sources about prostitution in Paris. Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France After 1850* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), xvi–xvii.

residents, quotidian, and other less frequent visitors—and examine why and how they have used its public spaces.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis, situated in the 10th arrondissement of Paris, remains—in 2012—one the city’s busiest neighborhoods. In the 1950s and 1960s, the area had a traditionally Parisian economy, based on a range of retail businesses and a few successful specialized industries. Its main artery, the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, was a popular market street with fruit and vegetable street vendors and shops, clothing stores, cafés, bars, restaurants, and a wide array of other businesses. On its side streets, one found clothing manufacturers, printing presses, the Baccarat crystal factory, dozens of other producers and dealers in porcelain and crystal, the center of French fur production and sales, and a few other manufacturing industries. While the neighborhood’s residents were mainly French nationals, many of whom were recent migrants to Paris, there was also a considerable Eastern European Jewish population composed of immigrants some of whom had arrived in the 1920s and 1930s and others who moved to France after leaving Nazi concentration camps at the end of the war.²⁶ The neighborhood, like a good portion of the city center, had been left relatively unaffected by two great periods of immigration into France: in the 1950s from Portugal, Spain, and Italy and in the 1960s from its former colonies around the world.

The neighborhood’s proximity to two of the city’s major train stations, the Gare de l’Est and the Gare du Nord, respectively serving the eastern and northern parts of France, and its quantity of cheap hotels, some of which offered monthly room rentals, made it a convenient starting point for people moving to Paris. Some have referred to it as a *quartier de transit*, or transit neighborhood.²⁷ It was also a place easily accessible to people coming from other parts of Paris and its greater region. The Faubourg Saint-Denis lay on the well-trodden path from the two train stations to Les Halles, tempting passersby with its many cafés, small clothing shops, bathhouses, and street vendors. Even in the 1950s and 1960s, it was a neighborhood constantly filled with quotidian and other less regular visitors.

During the 1970s major changes—national in scope—began to influence the neighborhood’s evolution. By the middle of the decade, the neighborhood’s largest

²⁶ Many of the Jews living and working in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1950s and 1960s had survived World War II either in hiding or after enduring stays in concentration camps. Some had lived in the neighborhood before the war and returned to it in 1945. Mme N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., November 27, 2009,” In person, November 27, 2009. For more on Jews in France during World War II, see Michael Robert Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

²⁷ The word, *quartier*, is the closest word to “neighborhood” in the French language. While it could also be translated as “quarter,” in everyday use it is almost equivalent to neighborhood. The Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood is referred to as the *quartier du Faubourg Saint-Denis* in French, for example.

manufacturing companies as well as many smaller businesses and shops had begun to close as they did all over France thanks to transformations in manufacturing and the retail economy. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was also shaped by a tightened immigration policy from 1973 allowing only asylum seekers access to papers. Political refugees from Greece, Yugoslavia, and Poland moved to the neighborhood in small numbers and opened a variety of businesses. By the 1980s, political refugees from Turkey fleeing the new military dictatorship—both members of left-wing political parties and later of Kurdish liberation groups like the PKK—established important communities in the neighborhood. Many Punjabi Muslims fleeing Pakistan and India also began to arrive in the 1980s. Numerous people from other backgrounds and circumstances also came during this period, including ethnically Indian Mauritians.

To view these immigrants only as part of their ethnic groups would be a mistake. Social networks defined by immigrant communities at cafés, barber shops, hair salons, and other meeting places did play a significant role in people's lives in the neighborhood. Yet individuals within a given ethnic group came to the Faubourg Saint-Denis for vastly different reasons and often had more in common with people from other groups or even the French people who frequented the neighborhood before them than with others of their own group. Many others outside of the visibly present ethnic groups also lived, worked, or spent time there without anyone taking notice.

Many of the people to come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis during this period were attracted to it for similar reasons. Real estate was cheap and vacancies were high. Immigrants were also attracted to its proximity to the Sentier, the then still-vibrant garment district. Jews from Eastern Europe, North Africa, and even Ottoman lands had been drawn to its jobs since the late nineteenth century. In the 1970s it still remained a starting point for many of the poorer immigrants coming to the Paris region, where low-paid, undocumented jobs were easily found. The neighborhood continued to welcome recent immigrants looking for work into the twentieth-century.

Since the 1990s, however, many younger, wealthier residents have moved into the neighborhood. Like typical gentrifiers of cities around the world since the 1990s, they generally put a premium on living in the city center in affordable neighborhoods with old buildings and busy streets. They have found all of these things in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Even with the neighborhood's increasingly expensive real estate, its streets remain filled with quotidian. Except for a growing handful of trendy cafés and restaurants, the presence of this new group of residents is not particularly visible. From the second floor up, the Faubourg Saint-Denis is becoming more and more a place for the well-off; the street, however, remains the home of everyday people or, as the French call them, the *classes populaires*.

These people usually live far away from the city center, mostly in the suburbs of Paris. Saïd, the owner of La Ferme and, before 2010, the owner of Le Château d'Eau, one of the busiest cafés in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, estimated that 90 percent of his customers do not live in the

neighborhood.²⁸ Neither does he, nor any of his employees. Many of his customers come to hang out and pass the day, not to rush in and out. Saïd's café, like most others in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, caters to neighborhood regulars who do not reside in the area. Even though these people do not make their homes in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, it nevertheless is their neighborhood.

Reconstructing neighborhood life and the history of the use of public space in the Faubourg Saint-Denis is a complex task. It, like a number of neighborhoods in Paris, has been addressed so infrequently by writers that finding any information about life within it is difficult. Not every place in Paris has been the setting of novels and films or the subject of academic studies and newspaper and magazine articles, such as the more famous Boulevard Saint-Germain, the Marais, or even Belleville, the city's most thoroughly studied immigrant neighborhood.²⁹ Although Parisian neighborhoods have been studied more comprehensively than those of almost any city in the world, large gaps of knowledge remain for certain less prominent parts of the city. These places are often the ones in which their quodians live in other parts of town or in the suburbs.

The history of public space in Paris and in the Faubourg Saint-Denis changed with the rise of municipal democracy in Paris. After 1977, when Paris elected its first mayor since 1871, local politics began to favor residential constituents as opposed to the previous top-down control exerted by the city's unelected prefect. Residents had finally gained a voice in municipal decisions, which had previously been controlled by a state-appointed, unelected prefect. Shortly afterwards, in the early 1980s, each arrondissement in Paris was granted the right to elect its own mayor as well. As part of this process of political decentralization in France, President François Mitterand and his Socialist government instituted a national policy that gave localities the ability to collect more taxes and control more of their budget rather than have it sent to them from the national government's coffers. The game of local politics in Paris had changed. Residents, who now voted for local officials, had more political power than ever before, and municipal officials, who worked in the arrondissement, had every incentive to court their votes.

These residents had also increasingly become homeowners. Before 1958, Paris was a city composed almost entirely of renters. Every pre-1920s building was owned entirely by an individual or a group, who rented out different apartments.³⁰ It had been legally impossible for sections of a building to have different owners. In 1958, in order to create incentives to modernize

²⁸ Saïd, "Interview with Saïd, July 1, 2009," In person, July 1, 2009.

²⁹ For Belleville, see the detailed historical study of its communities during the nineteenth century: Thierry Fayt, *Les villages de Paris: Belleville, Charonne, Auteuil et Passy: mythes et réalités d'un espace communautaire* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2003). For a rich study of contemporary café life in Belleville, see Anne Steiner and Sylvaine Conord, *Belleville cafés* (Paris: Editions l'échappée, 2010).

³⁰ See Alexia Yates, "Selling La Petite Propriété: Marketing Home Ownership in Early-Twentieth-Century Paris," *Entreprises Et Histoire* 64, no. 3 (2011): 11–40.

the city's dilapidated housing stock and to make it financially easier for real estate developers to construct much-needed housing, the French government created the *loi de copropriété*. This new statute allowed a building to be split up into multiple units, much like a co-op in the United States. Each owner of a portion of a building would pay monthly fees for the upkeep of the common areas of the building, but would own only his personal unit. Bit by bit, owners sold their buildings to residents or to investors who would re-rent individual apartments. By 2011, almost all buildings in Paris had been converted to *copropriétés*.

After the 1980s, the city hall of each *arrondissement*, now able to collect taxes, had incentive to work with property owners to increase real estate prices and thus increase tax revenue. The decentralization policies instituted by Mitterrand had given local governments the power to collect property taxes themselves rather than receive their budgetary funds directly from the national treasury. Mitterrand wanted to create incentives for local governments to build more homes, to beautify the city center, and to do whatever possible to make their jurisdictions more attractive. It worked. City governments began to use their newly decentralized urban planning powers as the primary vehicle to please their constituents and increase property values.

Local governments instituted resident-friendly rules that created quieter, greener streets. Residents, real estate investors, and local governments understood that Parisians were willing to pay more for apartments on streets with no traffic and little noise. They set up pedestrian-only districts, reduced automobile traffic with one-way streets and wider sidewalks, built bicycle lanes, and prohibited loud noise after 10:00 p.m. Although the residents wanted to live in busy neighborhoods where they could shop or dine, they also wanted peace and quiet when they slept at night. They desired to live both in the city and in the suburbs at the same time.

The quotidian of the Faubourg Saint-Denis were no exception. They chose, however, to live in the suburbs. While some of the people interviewed have said that they would prefer to live in Paris and eliminate the daily commute to their job or their *quartier*, as they generally call it, the large majority is happier living far away from the Faubourg Saint-Denis and considers it too noisy for them to sleep. Redouane, a 26-year-old bartender who loves to go clubbing in Paris until dawn, does not like sleeping in the neighborhood.³¹ On the occasions when he worked the night shift at his family's café and had to be back to work at eight o'clock the following morning, he chose not to sleep in the apartment directly above the café that the family rented for precisely this purpose. Instead, he took the 30-minute drive back to his home in the city of Saint Denis, a suburb to the north of Paris, only to have to take the train back to Paris a few hours later.

Of the quotidian who make similar decisions, many, like Redouane, grew up in the calm of the suburbs. Others spent their childhood in rural or urban parts of Africa, Europe, or Asia. For all of these people, with such a vast range of experiences and approaches to the city and urban life, the Faubourg Saint-Denis is attractive because it is an exciting, busy marketplace. For them, leaving home every day is a ritual, one that can sometimes be frustrating, but one that is not always a burden. They, like many suburban Americans wealthier than they are, have chosen to

³¹ Nono and Redouane, "Interview with Nono and Redouane, May 15, 2010," In person, May 15, 2010.

live outside the city and to commute to its center every day. Very few of them would choose to live in their marketplace.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis has managed to remain an active, vibrant neighborhood because its quotidian residents have always found ways to use its spaces effectively. Despite the increased motivations of homeowner-residents to influence the development and the use of their neighborhood's streets and public spaces, the Faubourg Saint-Denis continues to be a quintessential urban space, constantly changing and in flux. The physical structure of the neighborhood, however—the pattern of its streets and its architecture—has been a constant over the past two hundred years.

Following an examination of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's streets and architecture, we will look at the neighborhood during 1960, an arbitrary year chosen for the availability of a number of rich sources that reveal much about everyday life and the presence of quotidian residents. These sources—including tax records, business directories, classified ads, and films—allow a deep examination into the private and public spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in a way that is currently impossible for later years, for which tax records either are not yet available for study due to privacy laws or are not as richly documented.

Traveling a mile south in Paris, we will then examine the destruction of Les Halles and the protests that attempted to keep the market's pavilions standing in 1971. Led by many people who lived far away from the area and who risked arrest for their participation, these protests—viewed through internal police documents and press accounts—reveal the importance that people in the Paris region placed on a part of the city that was dear to them yet located far from their residences. These events also brought both the French government and Parisians to embrace a preservationist vision for the city center of Paris, as they feared further destruction of the city's architectural fabric.

The story then returns to the Faubourg Saint-Denis during the 1970s to consider how it changed during the difficult period when many manufacturing and retail businesses in the city center began to fail. Soon after, many new immigrant communities arrived and infused the neighborhood's public spaces and businesses with new life, constantly developing throughout the 1980s and 1990s. At the same time, the public space of the neighborhood became more strongly contested between residents and the users of its streets. The neighborhood's homeowner-residents—wealthier than ever before and fearful of a drop in real estate prices—had new incentives to try to shape the public space of the neighborhood to suit their needs.

Through oral interviews, telephone directories, television clips, and other diverse sources, the last chapter tells the story of contemporary life in these contested spaces. By speaking with the residents and quotidian residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, it is possible to examine questions that were difficult to answer for earlier periods, such as why individuals have chosen to come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis and how they have come to use and share its public spaces. Although these

questions can be answered in the present by speaking directly with the neighborhood's users and through ethnographic observation, it is a more challenging project to understand how its past residents and quotidian users used its space. To begin, one must first understand the construction and layout of the spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis that its users have shared for centuries.

Preamble

The Spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis



Figure 1. The rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis at its intersection with the rue du Château-d'Eau and the rue des Petites-Ecuries, looking south toward the Porte Saint-Denis, seen in the distance, on July 13, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. Author's photo.

On August 6, 2009 Nono burst out of the café, dodged the pedestrians spilling onto the street from the crowded, narrow sidewalk and, as soon as he stepped onto the rue du Château-d'Eau, stuck out his left arm. Traffic instantly stopped. Nono calmly walked into the busy intersection and approached a car driving toward him down the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Within seconds horns were blaring, but neither he nor anyone walking on the street paid them any attention. Keeping his left arm held out and using his body to block the road, Nono used his other hand to wave the car toward him, granting it VIP access to the rue du Château-d'Eau. Enjoying his job as traffic cop, he continued to hold out his left hand while he bent over to shake the hands of the man and woman in the car, which had come to block most of the intersection. They chatted for a minute, laughing almost the entire time.

As their conversation was coming to a close, the honking got louder and louder. Nono pulled his head out of the car's window after he had said goodbye and turned around only to see an enormous man stepping out of the driver's seat of the first of the honking cars. The driver violently slammed the door and walked straight at Nono. Nono turned toward the man, approached him, and kissed him on both cheeks, as French friends do. Soon, all four of them were standing in the middle of the intersection, laughing. A minute later, after chatting some more, Nono waved goodbye to both cars, grinning as he returned to his real job at the café amidst the blaring of horns.



Figure 2. The early evening bustle on the same street corner on Monday, October 4, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. Author's photo.

This street corner, the intersection of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, the rue du Château-d'Eau, and the rue des Petites-Ecuries, is almost always busy (see Figures 1 and 2). Although nothing passes through this corner at speeds above fifteen miles per hour, the corner has a palpable energy and seems to defy any sense of order. Some people spill onto the street from the two corner cafés. Others plow through the center of the street (note the two women in Figure 1 and the woman on the right in Figure 2), into oncoming traffic, while others (much less frequently) cross the street at the painted crosswalks. Some, taking a rest to chat with a friend, to use their cell phone, or to drink a beer, lean on the three-foot-tall posts lining the sidewalks to prevent cars from entering pedestrian

space (see Figures 2 and 5). Others sit on top of the receptacles for the Vélib, the city's bicycle rental program, or, when they are especially lucky or daring, on top of the cushioned leather seats of motorcycles parked on the sidewalk (see the man on the right in Figure 4). Some park their bicycles, motorcycles, and cars along the sides of the intersection (see Figures 3 and 5), sometimes even right in the center, like Nono's friends, in order to say hello to a friend or to grab a quick coffee. One often wonders if there is no traffic light at the intersection because urban planners knew that no one would even think about obeying it. It is a street corner where one does what one wants and in the way that one wants to do it, a nightmare for urban planners. But there is something exciting about its constant performance that makes it stimulating enough to continue to attract people every day to spend their time watching the city move by.



Figure 3. Looking from the terrasse of Le Château d'Eau north onto the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis on April 7, 2010 at 2pm. Author's photo.



Figure 4. Looking north on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis at the corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau (right) and the rue des Petites Ecuries (left) on August 29, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. Author's photo.



Figure 5. Both customers and other individuals hanging out on the street in front of Le Château d'Eau on May 5, 2011 at 9:00 p.m. A small child leans on the motorcycle on the left. Author's photo.

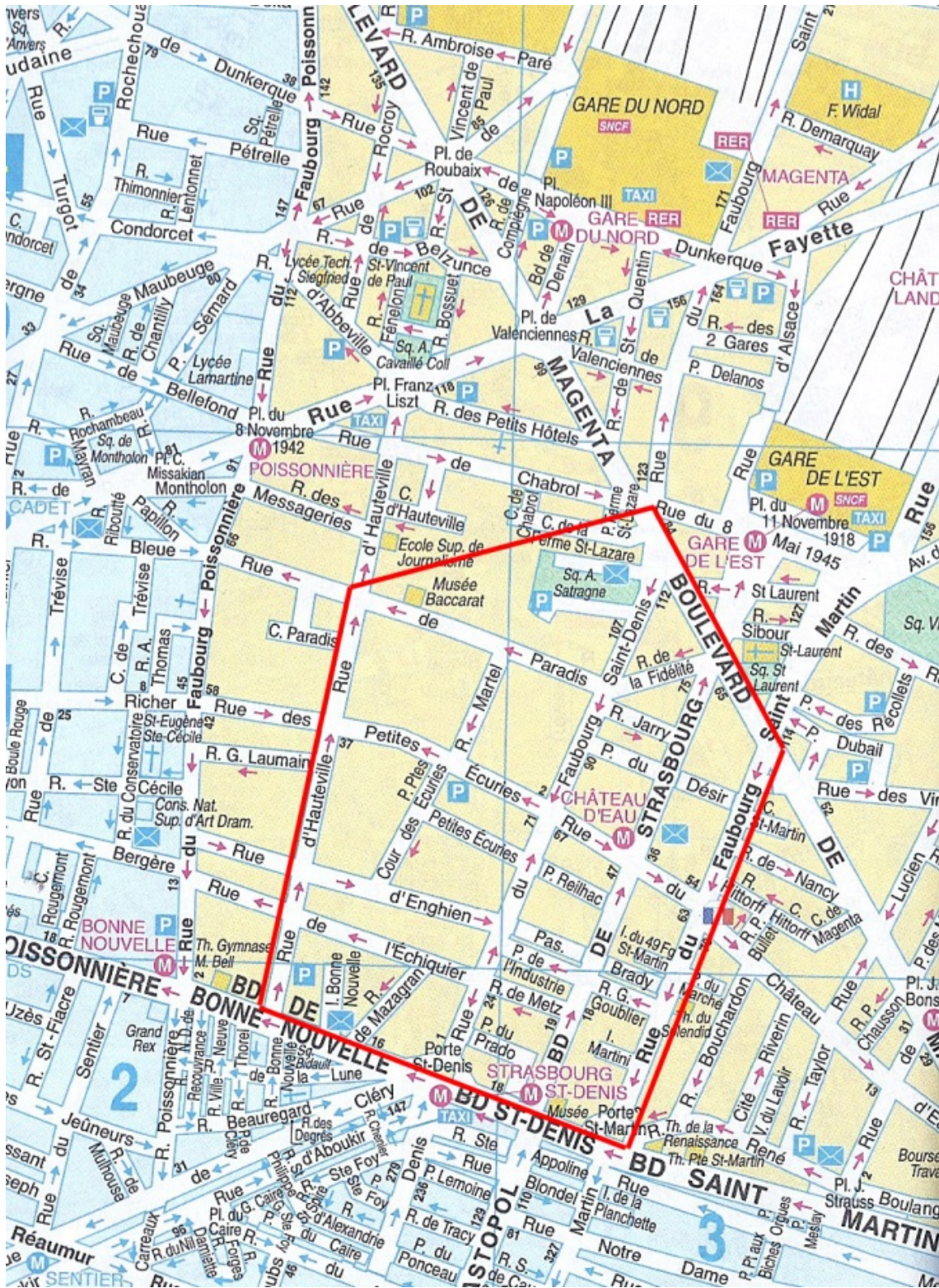


Figure 6. A map of central Paris in 2008, with the loose boundaries of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood marked by thick lines. Adapted from *Plan de Paris par arrondissement* (Paris : A. Leconte, 2008).

This street corner is but one space in the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood in Paris's 10th arrondissement (see Figure 6 for its general delineations). It is also a space in a number of different neighborhoods, including Château-d'Eau, Porte Saint-Denis, Paradis, and others that might not even have names. A neighborhood, like most divisions of urban space, is never static—what one person thinks defines a border or separation between one neighborhood and another will be at the center of a neighborhood for someone else. For the purposes of this book's examination of how life in a small geographic section of Paris has evolved, the idea of neighborhood must be approached as flexibly as possible, not only allowing for, but also appreciating every individual's distinct understanding of a



Figure 7. Map of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood and its surrounding area from 2008. Adapted from *Plan de Paris par arrondissement* (Paris : A. Leconte, 2008).

space, or what some scholars refer to as “place.” Place, to them, is what grows out of the human, cultural meanings layered on top of fixed, immobile space.¹ Regardless of the countless meanings the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people have given to the space of this street corner and the area surrounding it since the late nineteenth century, its structure has not significantly changed. In this book, these spaces and all of the different ways they have been understood will generally be referred to as the Faubourg Saint-Denis

¹ See Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 4–7.

as it has historically been the most commonly used name for this geographical area. Using this name is not an attempt to deny the diversity of how people make sense and order this part of Paris in their heads. It is rather an attempt to encapsulate that multiplicity under one umbrella term that allows for a discussion of this geographic area of Paris over an extended period of time despite the constant change to life in it.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis, as it is discussed in this book, is a neighborhood focused around a market street, the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, which has been filled with shops, restaurants, and cafés of all types for hundreds of years. Its loosely defined borders are marked with a red line in Figure 6, though the story that follows will frequently cross these porous boundaries. It deserves to be called a neighborhood not because there is a single, unified community within it, but because there is a sort of order to its public spaces that has continued to draw people to it for work, for leisure, and often simply to pass through.



Figure 8. The Porte Saint-Denis pictured in an early twentieth-century postcard, looking to the north. The rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis recedes into the distance behind it. Author's collection.

Many people whose geographic focus in the area is on the southern edge of the neighborhood near the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station at the Porte Saint-Denis—the seventeenth-century victory arch built to commemorate Louis XIV's gains in the eastern part of the country near the modern border with Germany—have often called their neighborhood, not surprisingly, Strasbourg Saint-Denis or Porte Saint-Denis.² Louis Chevalier, an influential historian of Paris, understood these multiple viewpoints describing the same space when he wrote about the area in his *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*.³ He viewed the space around the

² See the more detailed, zoomed-in map in Figure 7 to locate these places. Louis XIV also built another victory arch at the same time just a minute's walk to the east, the Porte Saint-Martin, also visible on the map.

³ Louis Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne : 1940-1960* (Paris: Fayard, 1982).

arch and at the intersection of the Boulevard de Strasbourg and the Boulevard Saint-Denis as one distinct from the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but recognized that one could view it from the opposite perspective:

One could consider the Faubourg Saint-Denis as only an extension or an annex of the intersection. But for most of the residents of the Faubourg, it was the intersection that was an extension and annex of the Faubourg. For them to hear and for them to see, acting like they are in their own home, with the bad manners of owners, Strasbourg Saint-Denis belonged to the Faubourg Saint-Denis less than to the rest of the city.⁴

Strasbourg Saint-Denis was, in fact, a place owned by the rest of Paris, not by the small streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis at its side. The metro station and the arch were on the Grands Boulevards, the stretch of wide boulevards whose construction began just a decade before the Porte Saint-Denis was finished. The boulevards were built on top of the old city walls, which had existed in different versions since the fourteenth century. After Louis XIV's victories and the great strength of the French army, there was little risk of attack on Paris's city center, so the walls could be demolished to make way for wide streets for carriage traffic and for theaters, bars, and other forms of entertainment that could benefit from such novel, expansive spaces.



Figure 9. The Porte Saint-Denis and the Grands Boulevards from a postcard in the early 1930s. View towards the northeast from the south side of the Boulevard Saint-Denis. Author's collection.

⁴ Ibid., 232.

Since that moment, these attractions have made the Grands Boulevards a meeting point, a place for people not only to visit for leisure, but also to work at the many businesses and establishments that clustered there. Even beforehand, the areas near the city walls—on the side of the *faubourgs*, or the districts lying outside the limits of the city—had been popular for recreation and business as they had not been subject to many of the city’s regulations, including taxes on certain goods, alcohol included. After the renovation of the boulevards, these areas quickly became retail centers, places people wanted to visit in the evening or on the weekends to shop and watch the spectacle of the city. The boulevards have been romanticized as such in countless novels, poems, paintings, engravings, songs, and films during the past three centuries. While Figures 8, 9, and 10 do not confirm these idealized views, they do show the bustle of the Boulevard Saint-Denis near the Porte and at the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station, which has multiple exits around the arch. The space around the arch seems to be filled not only with people performing countless tasks but also with every type of transportation possible. From a line of taxis in Figure 10 to the buses depicted in all three, as well as the metro station, which opened in 1908, the area around the Porte Saint-Denis was a place from which one was and still is able to get to almost any part of the city quickly.



Figure 10. The Porte Saint-Denis and the Grands Boulevards, also from an early-1930s postcard, photographed from the middle of the Boulevard Saint-Denis looking northwest. Author’s collection.



Figure 11. The intersection of the Boulevards Saint-Denis and Strasbourg, looking north onto the Boulevard de Strasbourg from the southwest corner, from a late-1930s postcard. Author's collection.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the space of the Grands Boulevards expanded in the area around the Faubourg Saint-Denis when Baron Haussmann, while leading Paris's most significant urban renewal project in its history, demolished building after building lying between the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin to create one of his most important roads.⁵ This north-south axis would allow for quick movement of carriages and soldiers from the newly built train station in the 10th arrondissement, the Gare de l'Est, almost all the way to the Ile de la Cité, the island in the heart of the city where Notre Dame Cathedral stands. The portion of the road in the 10th arrondissement was named the Boulevard de Strasbourg because the trains from the Gare de l'Est traveled directly to France's largest city in the east. The Boulevard de Strasbourg quickly became a lively extension of the Grands Boulevards with theaters, dance halls, restaurants, and countless other shops that were willing to pay higher rents for their posh new spaces. Cafés like Biard, depicted in Figure 11 on the left, flourished in this environment as a place to stop and eat or drink for thousands of people who came to the busy intersection every day.

In Figure 12, one can clearly see how large the scale of these streets is relative to the corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue du Château-d'Eau in Figures 1

⁵ Haussmann also organized the construction of Boulevard de Magenta in the late 1850s, which creates another defining border for the Faubourg Saint-Denis on its northeast side.



Figure 12. The same view of the Boulevards de Strasbourg and Saint-Denis in 1970. Archives de la Préfecture de Police, 5960-16.

through 5. The spaces occupied by La Scala, the theater on the left, and the Eldorado, the large Art-Deco theater and nightclub on the right-hand side of the boulevard, had been built to attract a substantial crowds. These businesses, when successful, filled their owners' pockets nicely.

These spaces attracted people of all types from all over the region. Louis Chevalier wrote of Strasbourg Saint-Denis during the 1950s:

For any Parisian wanting to feel thoroughly the breath of the night, Les Halles was generally just a stopping point, a passing, yet strong, gust of wind. It was at Strasbourg-Saint-Denis that he needed to go to discover, or rather to experience for himself the city at the moment when it ended its daytime work and primed itself for the night... All social classes were present, all professions, all occupations, including those that did not have a name. One could have called it... "the great meeting place of the city."⁶

⁶ Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 149.

These wide boulevards define the Faubourg Saint-Denis because of the differences between their spaces—their sizes, shapes, cost, and also the types of businesses and social interaction they promote. The Faubourg Saint-Denis's streets are narrow, its retail shops are small, affordable, and have not made many business owners rich. Its public spaces are intimate versus the expansiveness and anonymity of the boulevards.

This was not always the case, however, as the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin had once been the equivalent of thoroughfares, although they had different names at the time. The latter had once upon a time, under the Romans, been Paris's *cardo maximus*, the city's central north-south street that took travelers—if they had enough stamina—to Flanders if they continued north and to Avignon and Marseille if they headed south. Once Christianity took hold in Paris, the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, the city's secondary *cardo* under the Romans, became the central road, especially in terms of its access to important local destinations. It led to the town of Saint-Denis, the most important Christian site in close proximity to Paris and also where all French kings were buried.⁷ It and its Gothic cathedral—France's first—were



Figure 13. A view of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis looking north between the Porte Saint-Denis and the rue de l'Echiquier from an early twentieth-century postcard. Author's collection.

⁷ Saint-Denis was named after Paris's patron saint who was beheaded on the top of Montmartre ("Mount Martyr," posthumously named after Denis) by the Romans during the third century A.D. for his religious views. He then, according to Catholic legend, picked up his head and walked to the closest hidden community of Christians, who lived to the north of Paris in a small village, later named Saint-Denis.

the last stop for the king on Easter, when he would attend morning mass at Notre Dame on the Ile de la Cité, process with his retinue north on the rue Saint-Denis until he crossed the old city walls and the Porte Saint-Denis, change his horses to his countryside retinue, and make his way to evening mass in Saint-Denis. When a king died, his body would follow the same path, pausing for a day or two for viewing at the Saint-Lazare Church on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, where the Square Alban-Satragne is currently located. Since the arrival of the boulevards and the French Revolution, which put an end to these processions, the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis has lost this centrality.

It has remained a vibrant street, however, known into the twenty-first century for its marketplace for food, clothing, and various other goods (see the itinerant street vendors in Figure 13). Its buildings, most of which were built in the first half of the nineteenth century, had been designed for a different kind of city than the one that had developed decades later when Haussmann brought his grander architectural style to Paris. In 2012, the neighborhood's public spaces—any space that can be entered freely by someone walking down the street, including shops and cafés—continued to have the same structure that they had had for almost two hundred years. While this physical structure does not by any means determine how the spaces are used, it does promote certain ways of using the space. The shops and cafés on the streets and inside its *passages*,



Figure 14. The interior of the Passage du Prado with its small shops on April 7, 2010 at 12:00 p.m. Author's photo.



Figure 15. The Passage Brady with its Indian and Pakistani restaurants on April 7, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. Author's photo.



Figure 16. The early nineteenth-century interior courtyard and passageway of 65 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, photographed on August 29, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. The passageway extends hundreds of feet west of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, parallel to and just south of the rue des Petites Ecuries. Workshops and offices line the sides of the passageway, while apartments and more workshops fill the floors above. Author's photo.



Figure 17. The east side of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis between the rue de l'Echiquier and the Porte Saint-Denis on September 3, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. Author's photo.

or covered arcades (see the Passage du Prado in Figure 14 and the Passage Brady in Figure 15), as well as the workshops and apartments on the upper floors of buildings and in their courtyards (see Figure 16), were made for small businesses which did not need significant revenue to succeed because their costs were not high. While there were some larger industrial spaces in the Faubourg Saint-Denis built after Haussmann, they had little effect on the overall economy and use of space in the neighborhood.⁸

The intimacy of these spaces extended to the neighborhood's streets, which while wider than some in Paris, often had a cluttered, crowded feel. In Figure 13, the sides of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and its sidewalks were crammed not only with pedestrians, vendors, and window displays, but also garbage (see the trash lying along curb on the left side of the photograph). After the advent of automobiles, the street became even more crowded with not only cars but also motorcycles (see Figures 3 and 4), the ubiquitous green garbage bins, and the *terrasses* of cafés and restaurants—their outdoor seating areas (see Figure 17)—all competing for space on the sidewalks. The street vendors continue to operate (see Figure 18), although they sell different products than they did one hundred years before.

⁸ Between 1946 and 1985, a period of massive reconstruction in Paris, only 32 submissions were made to the city to demolish or renovate the exteriors of buildings in the neighborhood. "Demandes de permis de construire parisiens, vol. 21 (1946-1985)", 1985, Archives de Paris.



Figure 18. A young street vendor, protected from view by the truck behind him, sells pirated DVDs two buildings north of the entrance to the Passage Brady on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis on August 29, 2010 at 4:00 p.m. Author's photo.

These public spaces, beyond their practicality, have often been a pleasure to the many different people who have chosen to spend their time there. The theater of the street is at the core of why people like to be in public urban spaces; this neighborhood is no exception. There are many actors and many audience members, and most people play both roles. Nono, for example, like any successful café manager, excels in meeting people and being at the center of social interaction in the neighborhood. On his breaks, though, he often sits outside at a table on the café's *terrasse* and watches the street, with the distance and calmness of someone slowly watching the sun set. There are and have been thousands of others like him in the neighborhood at any given moment, participating both actively and passively in the city's street life.

The 10th arrondissement of Paris, the Faubourg Saint-Denis included, has never been considered an area of Paris where important things happen. As the historian Richard Cobb once put it:

The X^{me} arrondissement, as far as I know, possesses no literature, and it has been sung about by no poet. Could it be that people simply walk through it in haste to work, in fatigue at the end of the day...or noisily [hit] this outdated voie triomphale of music, vice, and pleasure, all three of very low quality, on Saturday nights? As if, indeed, it were but a lieu de passage, a sort of surface Métro, just like the one following exactly

the same route, reflecting the same street intersections, just below the ground. I wonder. Yet lovers must have met on its broad pavements, domestic dramas dragged along its grim, Sunday expanses, friendships been born between prostitutes and clients on the corner of the rue Faubourg Montmartre or in the little café opposite the Porte Saint-Denis.⁹

Cobb is correct to think that the spaces of the 10th arrondissement brought more to their users than simply a path to the next place. The public spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis are and have been very important to the lives of many of their users—residents, quotidian, and countless others who have spent time there on occasion. While their stories may not be as romantic or film-worthy as Cobb envisioned, they nonetheless happened. I hope to make them live again.

⁹ Richard Cobb, *Promenades: A Historian's Appreciation of Modern French Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 143.

CHAPTER 1

Rhythms, pt. 1

Residents and the Private Spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1960

Like all big cities it was made up of irregularity, change, forward spurts, failures to keep step, collisions of objects and interests, punctuated by unfathomable silences; made up pathways and untrodden ways, of one great rhythmic beat as well as the chronic discord and mutual displacement of all its contending rhythms. All in all, it was like a boiling bubble inside a pot made of the durable stuff of buildings, laws, regulations, and historical traditions.¹

- Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*

Just as Nono in 2009 walked across the intersection where the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, the rue du Château-d'Eau, and the rue des Petites-Ecuries meet, so did Anna Karina in late 1960 when the weather in Paris was turning cold. That day, she was playing Angela, a character in Jean-Luc Godard's *Une femme est une femme* (released in the United States as *A Woman is a Woman*) as she walked out of a bar, Le Napoléon (see Figure 1).²



Figure 1. Anna Karina, playing Angela in Jean-Luc Godard's *Une femme est une femme*, started to cross the rue des Petites-Ecuries after leaving the bar, Le Napoléon (yellow awning).



Figure 2. Karina as she crossed the street.

¹ Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins (Vintage, 1996), 4.

² Jean-Luc Godard, *Une femme est une femme*, 1961.

The people who saw Karina on the street that day did not know that she was playing a character in a film. Godard had chosen to film his story on the real, live street of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, with all its unpredictability.

Ms. Karina attracted some attention as she stepped into the intersection. An older man wearing a brown hat who was walking towards her (Figure 1) unabashedly turned around after passing her (Figure 2), presumably to examine her high, bright-red boots and that which rose above them. On the right side of both images, the handful of older women and the man waiting on the street corner also watched Karina as she crossed in front of them. It was not an everyday occurrence in 1960 on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis to see such a beautiful, chic woman. She appears clearly out of place on a street where no adult dressed so fashionably, walked with such poise, or was under the age of 30.

Godard did not seem interested in controlling the scene unfolding in front of the camera. He wanted to include in his film the uncontrolled life of the neighborhood and its people's reactions to the shooting. Some, such as the man in the foreground in Figure 1, looked straight into the camera as he passed by it. Godard wanted to capture these responses so much that later in the film he even devoted over a minute of footage to street scenes. He had filmed most of these in February 1961, two months after the scenes of Karina in the neighborhood.³ In both sessions, Godard and his cameraman, Raoul Coutard, sought to capture the everyday movements of a street as well as the powerful ability of a camera's presence to alter the life on it. Heads turned, lovers blushed, and others, like the man below (Figure 3), stared fiercely into the camera's eye.



Figure 3. A man in February 1961 walking in front of the post office along the Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle.

³ Ibid. One can ascertain the general period of the second filming of people on the streets of the neighborhood from the copy of *France Soir* being sold in one of the shots. Its front page featured a story about the assassination of Pierre Popie, a liberal lawyer fighting for Algerian independence, by the OAS, an armed group that sought to prevent Algeria's secession from France. The assassination took place in February 1961. The first picture of Anna Karina leaving the Napoleon, as well as other street shots of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, can be dated by the back cover of a different newspaper in an earlier scene inside a magazine shop at 61 bis rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, which was an edition of *France Dimanche* from December 22-28, 1960, that featured the recent Belgian royal wedding. We can assume that the filming of these scenes most likely occurred at some point during that week.

The camera, however, was not able to interrupt most of the activity on the street. People had more important things to attend to than pay it any attention. Thankfully some chose to ignore it, as they have left a rich document of the ephemeral street life of a neighborhood that otherwise would have been left unrecorded. It opens the door to telling a history of both the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood and its public space in 1960.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis had not been the first place in Paris on most directors' list of suitable locations to film. It was neither beautiful nor romantic, but rather ordinary and a bit dirty. This drabness was precisely what had attracted Jean-Luc Godard to the neighborhood.⁴

In this quest to capture the city as it was, Godard and New Wave cinema in general were kind to the field of urban history.⁵ These directors' desire to leave the confines of the film studio and to stage their scenes in uncontrolled streets produced a vast archive of scenes from everyday life in France from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s. These scenes have left unprecedented records of daily life for areas of Paris that are often omitted from history books.

Une femme est une femme is the most important source of the experience of the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood in the early 1960s. While it is incomplete and gives only a short glimpse into a few minutes of life on a few random days, it allows one to see the neighborhood's public space in motion as well as at rest—examining any frame as a photograph—and exposes the Faubourg Saint-Denis street life in all of its complexity.

Traces of how public spaces and the street are experienced by their users are almost entirely missing from the typical archives historians use to reconstruct life in urban neighborhoods. Tax and voting records reveal information about residents and businesses located inside the city's buildings, not about the people who walked on the sidewalks and the vendors who sold them goods. Urban planning and construction documents tell us about the architecture and politics of urban development in a city, but little about what took place in the same buildings and streets. Police records, while revealing details about crimes and complaints, neglect most of the unremarkable activity of a neighborhood. In all of these sources, however, lie small details that, accompanied with visual sources, can help reimagine street life in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

⁴ Godard was so enamored of the look of the apartment on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin in which he filmed the film's interior scenes that, when his time had run out to continue filming, he offered 10,000 francs and luxury hotel accommodation to its renters for the last week of shooting. The apartment was anything but special, with one bedroom and simple, unadorned walls, but it was authentically ordinary. That was what Godard sought, to the point that when the renters refused his offer, he recreated the apartment down to every last detail in a film studio. See Richard Brody, *Jean-Luc Godard, tout est cinéma* (Presses de la Cité, 2011), 144; Antoine de Baecque, *Godard* (Grasset, 2010), 172.

⁵ New Wave cinema, like the names of many art movements, was coined by critics and lacks precise definition. In general, though, its directors—including Godard, François Truffaut, Alain Resnais, and Louis Malle, among others—wanted to break from the conventions of typical filmmaking, leaving the studio for the street, cutting scenes at unusual moments, and experimenting with different approaches to narrative.

To understand everyday life in a neighborhood, one needs to look at both its resident and non-resident users who share its private and public spaces every day. All of these people are critical to a neighborhood, though the way they use the spaces of the neighborhood is often very different. For this moment around 1960, we will begin our story by looking inside the private spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis: its buildings, apartments, and workshops located off the street, inaccessible to pedestrians. Here we can see the history of the buildings themselves, of their residents, and of many of their businesses. This is the easier story to tell, as the details are found in the archives typically used to tell the history of neighborhoods. We will then, in Chapter 2, move to the public spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis around 1960. In order to examine the complexities of how and by whom these spaces were used, we will look creatively at the same archival sources along with others, like *Une femme est une femme*, that reveal hints of the ephemeral life that took place in them. Although their traces are few and far between, the quotidian and other less frequent visitors to the Faubourg Saint-Denis not only had a significant impact on the character of the neighborhood, but also played a primary role in the life in its public spaces and streets.

The political situation in Paris in the 1960s was volatile and dangerous. With the war in Algeria at its peak and rapid decolonization beginning to take place across the remnants of the French Empire in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, by 1959 violence had also erupted in the metropole. At the time, France was involved in a protracted fight to suppress a liberation movement in Algeria, which was not a colony but a department of France. The fight had made its way to Paris, where rival Algerian militant groups fought each other and the French government. Murders and bombings took place at an alarming rate. No other groups made the French Ministry of the Interior and its police forces more nervous during the 1950s. Even before the violence began, the French authorities had implemented aggressive monitoring and repression of colonial residents in Paris. The government had instituted surveillance programs of North Africans in the mid-1950s and increasingly hardened them by the early 1960s, to the point of instituting curfews for all people who looked like North Africans by late 1961.⁶ On October 17, 1961, the Paris police force, in an excessive response to a peaceful protest by people of all backgrounds against this race-based curfew, killed between 40 and 200 North Africans on the city's streets.⁷ A number of the Algerian men shot to death by the police were killed just a few

⁶ For a detailed study of police surveillance of North Africans in Paris with a focus on the Goutte d'Or neighborhood in the 18th arrondissement, see Amit Prakash, "Empire on the Seine: Surveillance, Citizenship, and North African Migrants in Paris (1925-1975)" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010).

⁷ The police continue to claim fewer casualties, while scholars believe that the dead numbered closer to 200. For more on this event, see Jean-Luc Einaudi, *Octobre 1961 : un massacre à Paris* (Fayard, 2001); Jim House and Neil MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Two superb films were released in 2011 to commemorate the event. For an examination of the event through interviews during

minutes' walk from the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, in front of the famous Rex cinema on the Grands Boulevards. Beyond the repression of North Africans, everyday life in Paris was not greatly affected by these political events. Life in the majority of its neighborhoods continued as usual.

Most areas in the city center in 1960 still resembled themselves before the war. Apart from the significant loss of many residents, including a large portion of the Jews who had lived in Paris, much of the city center was fundamentally unchanged. While offices of companies in the burgeoning service industries had been opening rapidly—especially in the 1st, 8th, and parts of the 9th arrondissements—most of the city's economy remained unchanged. It consisted of small- and medium-sized manufacturing, commercial, and industrial firms, coupled with a vibrant market of small retail and wholesale vendors on the streets. There were few signs of modernization beyond cars and certain shops in the smaller streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the Marais, and other neighborhoods in heart of Paris. The buildings had not been cleaned in decades and most of the apartments lacked toilets, gas, electricity, bathtubs, and showers. Immigrants and poorer workers also continued to use the same neighborhoods, taking advantage of the cheap rents and easy access to unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in the city center.

For almost 25 years after the end of World War II, the streets, economy, and social structure of the Faubourg Saint-Denis resembled both its past self and that of many other Parisian market neighborhoods of previous generations. Its streets, buildings, and courtyards were filled with people busily performing a multitude of tasks, most of which did not involve sitting at a desk. During the daytime, most people in the Faubourg Saint-Denis would sit with either a tool—a sewing machine or a pair of scissors, for example—or a drink in hand.

While French urban planners and the national government dreamt big and modern in their development projects, this neighborhood, like many others in Paris and across the country, moved forward at a slow pace. Although much of the writing about French cities during this period situates them in the context of a great period of economic growth, old habits often die hard and Parisians had not yet begun to reap the benefits of this modernization.⁸ Although certain politicians and planners may have envisioned uprooting the city center with high-rise buildings and wide roads in order to reduce what they considered to be chaos, the Faubourg Saint-Denis remained untouched by their planned changes. The neighborhood, like many of the old faubourgs in Paris, was a neighborhood that modernized much later than other places that were transformed by the state, industry, and real estate developers.

the twenty-first century and through previously unseen archival footage, see Yasmina Adi, *Ici on noie les Algériens*, 2011. For a previously censored film made just after the events, that has finally been released to the public, see Jacques Panijel, *Octobre à Paris*, 2011.

⁸ Scholars generally refer to this period as the *Trente Glorieuses*, or Thirty Glorious Years, due to the fast-paced economic growth and development of the welfare state that continued from just after World War II until the mid-1970s. The term was coined in Jean Fourastié, *Les trente glorieuses, ou, la révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975* (Fayard, 1979). For a book that treats Paris in the 1940s and early-to-mid 1950s in an older framework, see Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

The Faubourg Saint-Denis—if one even chose to call it that, as very few people had a name for it beyond the “rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis” or “Strasbourg-Saint-Denis,” the name of the metro station nearby—was a neighborhood defined by its location on the edge of other parts of the city, not by what was contained within it. In the seventeenth century, it was a neighborhood beyond the borders of Paris, found behind Louis XIV’s imposing victory arch and a less visible, yet important customs wall that separated the city from its outskirts. In 1960, it was on the edge of the Sentier garment district, which was located on the southern side of the Porte Saint-Denis and which spread into the Faubourg Saint-Denis. It was also situated less than a mile from the city’s wholesale food market at Les Halles and benefited greatly from its economy, though remained far enough away that no one would have considered it part of the city’s wholesale market district. And although the Faubourg Saint-Denis was separate from the neighborhoods of the Gare de l’Est or the Gare du Nord, two of the city’s biggest train stations, their location just five to ten minutes away by foot was crucial in providing a constant stream of visitors to its streets every day.

Despite its lack of identity, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was an important part of the city. The theaters and dance clubs along its edges were some of the best known in the country and every evening drew people from across the city, both as attendees and employees. The striptease shows along the Grands Boulevards (where Anna Karina’s character in *Une femme est une femme* worked and performed) attracted visitors seeking thrills, while the more adventurous came for the prostitutes, who seemed to have worked on every street in the neighborhood between 1945 and 1970.⁹ The porcelains, furs, fabrics, newspapers, and other items produced in the few square blocks of the Faubourg Saint-Denis made up a significant part of the city’s manufacturing economy. In addition, the people who did their shopping along the marketplace on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis often traveled long distances to buy everything they needed cheaply from its wide variety of shops. Its streets were filled with people buying and selling fruits, vegetables, meat, household products, and various other goods. In Figure 4 below, we see a clothing shop (blue storefront), a magazine and newspaper shop to its left, and a number of itinerant fruit and vegetable sellers, who lined the edge of the curb selling to passersby on the sidewalks or on the street. All of these people, regardless of why they came to the area, had a chance to watch and perform in a vast, exciting urban spectacle.

⁹ Mme N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., November 18, 2009” In person, November 18, 2009.



Figure 4. Anna Karina walking on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis just in front of the entrance to the Cour des Petites-Ecuries, seen at the right of the image.

Buildings

At the end of World War II in 1945, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was a neighborhood whose buildings had aged badly. Although Paris had not witnessed much destruction during the war years since the Allies bombed factories in the suburbs, not those inside the city, and the German military governor in Paris at the end of the war, Dietrich von Choltitz, chose to disobey orders and surrender without destroying the city, the general neglect of buildings during the German occupation left the city's available apartments in poor condition.¹⁰ Even prior to the war, Paris's housing stock had been old. The period between the two World Wars saw little construction or renovation, mainly due to the recession in the 1930s and the absence of financial incentives to construct buildings due to the poor performance of real estate investments.¹¹ People in Paris had grown used to living in old, neglected buildings that lacked the modern amenities that many city dwellers around the world had already considered necessities. This was not the France that the *Trente Glorieuses* later came to symbolize.

After more than ten years of recovery from the disaster of World War II, France entered a new era in which the nation believed that it could and would become great again. Military might was no longer the way through which the nation would prove its greatness, especially after the 1950s and early 1960s when the government realized it could no longer hold onto its remaining colonies. The French government, re-formed after the war, turned its focus to the living standards of the population and saw housing as a crucial domain to address while simultaneously stimulating the economy. This path was similar in principle to the New Deal in the United States.

¹⁰ For the definitive studies in English of Paris during World War II, see Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France During the German Occupation* (London: Macmillan, 2002); Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Philippe Burrin, *France Under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise* (New York: The New Press, 1996).

¹¹ Maud Loiseau and Catherine Bonvalet, "L'impact de la loi de 1948 sur les trajectoires résidentielles en Île-de-France," *Population (French Edition)* 60, no. 3 (May 1, 2005): 351, doi:10.2307/4150822.

Modern homes with toilets, showers, and refrigerators, and the focus on domestic affairs needed to build them, became a national priority.

After years of war and neglect, the city's buildings were covered in filth, generally dilapidated, and, as in most of the country, appeared more than ever to be stuck in the nineteenth century. The state put all of its weight behind the reconstruction of the most derelict parts of the city and the wider region. It used its coffers, overflowing with the tax revenues of a growing economy, not only to build public housing and roads but also to subsidize massive private development. Beginning in 1953, these renovations transformed the edges of Paris both inside and outside of its city limits and began to change small parts of the city center, though much less significantly. Some scholars have gone so far as to see the period between 1953 and 1973 as the second great renovation of Paris, after that of Baron Haussmann in the 1850s and 1860s.¹²

The demolitions involved were politically controversial. The French government forced large numbers of poor residents to vacate their homes and move into new public housing, frequently located very far away from their previous neighborhood. Many of these residents were Algerian, which made the expulsions even more suspicious, given the state's fear of and aggressive policies toward Algerian Muslims. While it is certain that the government and police's preoccupation with Algerians played a role in this moment of urban renewal in Paris, these renovations would have taken place even if Algerians had not been living in the poorest parts of town. It was a national project, similar to many others around the world in the twentieth century, to rid cities of visible signs of abject poverty and vastly improve living conditions for the poor with newly constructed housing.

¹² See Bernard Marchand, *Paris, histoire d'une ville : XIXe-XXe siècle* (Seuil, 1993). Chapter 5: "Un nouvel haussmannisme (1953-1974) ?", 279-320.

Even with these drastic changes to the urban fabric of Paris, much of its city center was left untouched by the demolition, reconstruction, and the social and cultural changes that reached the areas that the government prioritized. The majority of the buildings standing in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1950s had been built before the nineteenth-century renovations of the city. Using a rigid but helpful geographical definition of the neighborhood (see Figure 5)—its limits defined by the Boulevard de Strasbourg, Boulevards Saint-Denis and Bonne-Nouvelle, rue d’Hauteville, rue de Paradis, the top of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, and a small stretch of the Boulevard de Magenta—there was a total of 380 apartment buildings in 1954, when the French government performed the second postwar census of its population.¹³ Only five buildings had been built after 1915 and only 36 more between 1871 and the beginning of World War I in 1914. Eighty-six percent of the neighborhood’s buildings—a total of 327—had been built before 1871. Most of those buildings were over one hundred years old and had been built before Haussmann’s modernization project in the 1850s and 1860s.¹⁴ This was a much higher number than the national average: only 18 percent of buildings in cities with populations greater than 100,000 people were over 100 years old.¹⁵

Even after World War II, the neighborhood’s apartments had not yet been renovated to contain the modern amenities that residents of wealthy neighborhoods had come to possess. Table 1, which detail housing statistics in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1946, reveals many of the amenities available in the neighborhood’s apartments broken down by *îlot*—or plot—number.¹⁶ Approximately 60 to 70 percent of the neighborhood’s apartments had running water, while 35 to 40 percent had a toilet. Only a rare 5 to 10 percent had a shower or bath. Together these numbers were below the Paris average, but not significantly below, seeing as 77 percent of Paris apartments had running water, 49 percent a toilet, and 7 percent showers or bathtubs. Variation of amenities was great within buildings as well; it is likely that most of the apartments with toilets

¹³ The following group of statistics come from the Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957* (Paris: Imprimerie municipale, 1957), 244–245. This study used data from the 1954 national census.

¹⁴ The only buildings dating from the 1850s and 1860s in the neighborhood lie along the Boulevard de Strasbourg and the Boulevard de Magenta, both built by Haussmann as new thoroughfares cutting through the 10th arrondissement.

¹⁵ Cicely Watson, “Housing Policy and Population Problems in France,” *Population Studies* 7, no. 1 (July 1, 1953): 15, doi:10.2307/2172435.

¹⁶ It is important to note that these *îlots* were invented constructions of the French government to help it analyze its census results. The divisions between plots were relatively arbitrary and there was a great diversity of building types and populations within each plot, which is obscured by these statistics. Before 1946, the census looked at the entire Porte Saint-Denis neighborhood—the entirety of the map in Figure 5—but did not break down statistics more precisely. Until 2021, the *îlot* will remain the best way to examine the housing stock of the Faubourg Saint-Denis as well as the rest of Paris. Only then will it be possible to examine the census records more precisely, as it is only 75 years after a census when the French government, due to privacy laws, releases the individual responses of each household into the public domain. For all of the following statistics, see Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1949* (Paris: I.N.S.E.E. : Presses universitaires de France, 1949).

or electricity, for example, were located in buildings in which other apartments, especially the smaller, cheaper ones on upper floors, did not have the same amenities.¹⁷

<u>Ilot #</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u># of Households</u>	<u>People per HH</u>	<u>People per room</u>	<u>Rooms per home</u>	<u>% HH w. running water</u>	<u>% HH w. toilet</u>	<u>% HH w. bathtub or shower</u>
1566	667	315	2.1	1.1	2.0	61%	41%	10%
1567	1,197	578	2.1	1.0	2.1	59%	29%	5%
1568	1,332	645	2.1	1.0	2.0	63%	36%	5%
1569	1,764	833	2.1	1.1	1.9	58%	35%	5%
1570	618	280	2.1	1.1	2.0	76%	43%	4%
1571	1,167	507	2.3	1.1	2.2	75%	45%	4%
1572	920	400	2.3	1.1	2.2	74%	42%	12%
1573	2,363	1,071	2.2	1.2	1.9	59%	29%	8%
1578	680	303	2.2	0.9	2.4	72%	52%	12%
1579	565	261	2.2	1.4	2.1	78%	32%	6%
1580	1,137	490	2.3	1.1	2.1	69%	40%	7%
1581	1,685	801	2.1	1.2	1.8	56%	19%	4%
1582	907	419	2.2	1.1	1.9	61%	30%	9%
1583	2,123	960	2.2	1.1	2.1	68%	38%	13%
1584	1,645	741	2.2	1.0	2.6	70%	45%	7%

Table 1: 1946 housing statistics for the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood.¹⁸

It is difficult to trust these numbers, as they are based on imprecise census records from 1946. Many apartments and households were not counted in the results due to unreturned census forms and incomplete responses. In addition, this census did not distinguish between an apartment that had a shared toilet in its hallway and one that had a shared toilet or outhouse in its courtyard, as both are listed as lacking toilets. At that time, households that did not have bathtubs or showers had the option of creating makeshift versions by connecting a showerhead to a sink. Such impermanent renovations are also missing from these sources. Yet the statistics do show that the Faubourg Saint-Denis’s housing stock was not abnormal in Paris, that it was aging, and that, for a city that sought to modernize its housing, the neighborhood was a good candidate for demolition or significant renovations.

These statistics are more meaningful when examined against the same study performed in 1957 using the 1954 census results (Table 2). Change in the neighborhood’s housing over the

¹⁷ Although the plots—most of which make up a square block and house between 500 and 2,500 people in dozens of apartment buildings—varied in their rates of certain amenities, the differences were not as significant as the commonalities. While certain plots, such as 1581 and 1567 (see Figure 5), had abnormally low amenity rates across the board, and others, such as 1572, had significantly high ones, most plots fell close to the neighborhood’s average. Unfortunately, it is difficult to extrapolate with these statistics, as there is not enough information to tell us why certain parts of the neighborhoods have higher rates of amenities than others or if rates of amenities correlate with wealth or occupation in the neighborhood.

¹⁸ Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1949.*

period between 1946 and 1954 was not very significant (see Table 3).¹⁹ Although there was an increase—somewhere between 1 and 13 percentage points—in the percentage of apartments containing running water, a toilet, or a bathtub/shower, the majority of homes still lacked most amenities beyond running water. The number of rooms per home as well as the number of people per household and per room remained essentially constant. This suggests that the building stock did not witness significant transformation (the splitting of large apartments into smaller units, for example) and that socioeconomic changes to households in the neighborhood did not occur. The 1954 census numbers also reveal the number of apartments with central heating and with phone service, both which existed throughout the neighborhood but were not yet widespread. In some *îlots*, central heating was more prevalent than phone service, while in others the opposite was true. Overall, the comparison reveals that upgrades and change came slowly and piecemeal to the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the ten years after World War II.

<i>Ilot</i> #	Population	# of Households	People per HH	People per room	Rooms per home	% HH w. running water	% HH w. toilet	%HH w. central heating	% HH w. bathtub or shower	% HH w. phone
1566	896	450	2.1	1.1	1.9	71%	41%	36%	18%	25%
1567	1,347	698	2.0	1.0	2.0	71%	33%	14%	7%	15%
1568	1,405	636	2.2	1.0	2.1	68%	44%	6%	13%	22%
1569	1,885	889	2.1	1.1	2.0	68%	35%	14%	10%	16%
1570	633	293	2.2	1.1	2.0	83%	51%	13%	11%	16%
1571	1,410	603	2.4	1.1	2.1	77%	46%	28%	16%	20%
1572	1,003	409	2.4	1.1	2.2	73%	51%	20%	19%	29%
1573	2,736	1,270	2.2	1.1	2.0	72%	34%	15%	13%	16%
1578	725	319	2.3	1.0	2.4	78%	53%	21%	18%	21%
1579	652	329	2.0	1.0	1.9	79%	34%	16%	7%	14%
1580	1,484	677	2.2	1.1	2.0	74%	34%	22%	9%	16%
1581	1,826	887	2.1	1.2	1.8	67%	18%	17%	6%	10%
1582	1,100	515	2.2	1.1	1.9	70%	33%	24%	13%	17%
1583	2,458	1,155	2.2	1.1	2.0	63%	34%	18%	16%	18%
1584	1,692	767	2.3	1.0	2.3	76%	49%	8%	15%	21%

Table 2: 1954 housing statistics on the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood.²⁰

¹⁹ We cannot trust certain comparisons between the two studies, such as the population difference, because the two census projects used different methods to count and obtain numbers for the neighborhoods.

²⁰ Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*.

<u>Ilot #</u>	<u>People per HH</u>	<u>People per room</u>	<u>People per home</u>	<u>% HH w. running water</u>	<u>% HH w. toilet</u>	<u>HH w. bathtub or shower</u>
1566	0	0	-0.1	10%	0%	8%
1567	-0.1	0	-0.1	12%	4%	2%
1568	0.1	0	0.1	5%	8%	8%
1569	0	0	0.1	10%	0%	5%
1570	0.1	0	0	7%	8%	7%
1571	0.1	0	-0.1	2%	1%	12%
1572	0.1	0	0	-1%	9%	7%
1573	0	-0.1	0.1	13%	5%	5%
1578	0.1	0.1	0	6%	1%	6%
1579	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	1%	2%	1%
1580	-0.1	0	-0.1	5%	-6%	2%
1581	0	0	0	11%	-1%	2%
1582	0	0	0	9%	3%	4%
1583	0	0	-0.1	-5%	-4%	3%
1584	0.1	0	-0.3	6%	4%	8%

Table 3: Difference between 1954 and 1946 statistics (Table 1 results subtracted from Table 2 results). All percentages are calculated as the 1946 percentage subtracted from the 1954 percentage, not the percentage increase or decrease of the totals between 1954 and 1946.

Real estate prices remained low in the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood through the early 1960s. One apartment—listed in January 1961 as a recently renovated 400-square-foot two-bedroom unit with toilet on the second floor of a building near Strasbourg-Saint-Denis—was offered for sale at 8,000 NF, or approximately \$1,600.²¹ This was the same price as a similarly sized, renovated apartment in the Marx-Dormoy neighborhood much farther north in the 18th arrondissement or another near Boulevard Diderot in the 11th arrondissement, both in traditionally working-class and lower-middle-class neighborhoods. In contrast, a similarly equipped apartment located in a quieter neighborhood near the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont in the 19th arrondissement was selling for 12,000 NF, or \$2,400.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis was not among the cheapest neighborhoods, however. A one-bedroom apartment with a kitchen but without a toilet on the rue Myrha in the North African Goutte-d’Or neighborhood, traditionally one of the poorest migrant neighborhoods in Paris, was offered on the same date, fully furnished, for 3,000 NF, or \$800. This apartment was most likely unrenovated and in very poor condition, comparable to many of the apartments in the Goutte-d’Or neighborhood and some of the apartments in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Another agency specializing in expensive properties offered a studio in the Faubourg Saint-Denis with a kitchen and toilet for 11,500 NF, or \$2,300. This price differential over the larger two-bedroom apartment was most likely due to the age and style of the building in which

²¹ The real estate prices listed in the following paragraphs are taken from “L’immobilier-l’im,” *France-Soir* (Paris, January 22, 1961), 11. In the listings, NF refers to the “Nouveau Franc,” which was created by a devaluation of the French franc in 1958 in order to stop the plunge of the franc’s value (100 francs equaled one NF). Prices for many goods, however, often continued to be listed in older francs. In 1960, 5 NF would have been worth approximately one US dollar. See Michel-Pierre Chélini, “Le plan de stabilisation Pinay-Rueff, 1958,” *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* 48, no. 4 (October 2001): 110.

the apartment was situated. While most buildings in the Faubourg Saint-Denis were from before Haussmann's renovation of Paris in the 1850s and 1860s, the few more recent constructions commanded higher prices.

This same agency offered a similarly sized studio in the Guy Môquet neighborhood on the border of the 17th and 18th arrondissements—also a working-class and lower-middle-class neighborhood—for 26,000 NF, or \$5,200. It, however, had a telephone line installed, as well as built-in gas heating and a bathtub or shower. Without a doubt, the Guy Môquet apartment was in an elegant, late 19th- or early 20th-century Haussmannian building that had recently been renovated and was more luxurious than the Faubourg Saint-Denis apartment. In this instance, the neighborhood was not the cause for such a high price. Another one-bedroom, unrenovated apartment with a kitchen that lacked a toilet or bathtub in a Haussmann-era *pierre-de-taille* building, was being offered for 4,500 NF, or \$900.²² The smaller studio in the same neighborhood cost six times the price of the one-bedroom apartment because it had modern amenities. In the majority of Paris's neighborhoods, newly renovated, expensive apartments in grand buildings were available for purchase just next door from more affordable options.²³

Apartment rentals followed similar patterns to homes for purchase. In neighborhoods other than the most expensive ones, the price of rentals was determined mainly by the apartment itself and its amenities rather than by its street and surrounding neighborhood. A furnished room with a kitchen was offered just near the Porte Saint-Martin for 220 NF per month, or \$44, which was identical in price to a similar furnished room, also with a kitchen, near the Rome metro station in the 17th arrondissement, a more expensive neighborhood.

In the early 1960s, apartment rental prices across Paris were extraordinarily high relative to sale prices. At the same time, however, apartments were not considered to be good investments. The fear of even more expansive rent control made buying an apartment to rent a risky endeavor. The 1948 Law (*La Loi 1948*), the legislation that had imposed a system of partial rent control throughout France, had been designed to prevent price gouging by speculators at a time when the majority of the country did not have the means to cope with the fluctuations of the real estate market.²⁴ It covered only a certain portion of apartments in Paris, helping renters who stayed in their homes, but increasing the price of rentals available on the open market.

The demand to purchase apartments was also low in 1960 due to difficulties in obtaining credit. The government controlled most of the credit-granting organizations, such as the *Société de Credit Immobilier*, and made loans only to the most reliable customers with significant

²² *Pierre-de-taille* is loosely translated as “dimension stone.” Apartment buyers generally have paid premiums to live in a building made with these durable cuts of stone, which was why it was advertised in real estate listings.

²³ In the fancier neighborhoods in Paris, even minimally renovated apartments commanded high prices. A three-bedroom apartment in the luxurious Trocadéro neighborhood in the 16th arrondissement, even without a bathtub and shower, was listed at 60,000 NF, or \$12,000.

²⁴ For more on the *Loi 1948*, see Danièle Voldman, “La loi de 1948 sur les loyers,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* no. 20 (October 1, 1988): 91–102, doi:10.2307/3768678; Loiseau and Bonvalet, “L’impact de la loi de 1948 sur les trajectoires résidentielles en Île-de-France.”

assets.²⁵ Most purchasers paid for their apartments in cash up front, without credit, putting them out of reach for the majority of the city's inhabitants.

Perhaps most importantly, buying apartments was also a new activity in France. Before 1958, it was legally impossible to split up an older apartment building into multiple units and to sell those units to individual owners.²⁶ An older building could only be owned in its entirety based on its footprint on the ground, either by an individual owner or a group of owners, each of whom owned a share of the entire building. A member of the group could not own an individual apartment. The 1958 *Loi de Copropriété* (the Co-op Law, in loose translation) marked the moment when urban housing became a traded commodity.²⁷ Previously, buying an apartment building was considered a safe investment that guaranteed the receipt of rents to a relatively wealthy owner or group of owners over a long period of time. In 1962 almost all of the property owners of buildings in the Faubourg Saint-Denis lived in other parts of Paris, France, and the world.²⁸ After the introduction of this law, individuals living in an apartment could become homeowners. It took years, however, for owners of individual buildings to sell off their property and for the renters of Paris—almost all of the city's population in 1958—to become owners of their own homes. In the decades to come, this gradual rise in homeownership would prove to be one of the most significant structural changes to affect neighborhoods in Paris.

Private Space: Residents and their Businesses

Who were these residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis when *Une femme est une femme* was being filmed in 1960-61 and what did they do? What role did they play in the neighborhood and what can be said about them with any certainty? And what businesses rented space in the buildings of the neighborhood?

As the census forms filled out by individual households for this period remain protected according to French privacy laws until at least 2029, the best available sources for detailed information about households and businesses are the registers of home rental and business license taxes (the *taxes mobilières et patentes*).²⁹ In France, all renters—whether residents or businesses—pay annual taxes to the state based on the assessed value of the space they rent. These registers contain records detailing the names of the principal resident of a household or

²⁵ Watson, "Housing Policy and Population Problems in France," 41–42.

²⁶ For a history of *copropriété* before the 1958 law and apartment ownership of newly built apartment buildings in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s, see Alexia Yates, "Selling La Petite Propriété : Marketing Home Ownership in Early-Twentieth-Century Paris," *Entreprises Et Histoire* 64, no. 3 (2011): 11–40.

²⁷ For more on the legal aspects of *copropriété*, as defined in the 1958 law, see the legal, yet clear and readable, text: *Guide des copropriétaires et des sociétés de construction* (Paris: Éditions de l'Actualité juridique, 1959).

²⁸ See "Matrices des taxes foncières du quartier de la Porte Saint-Denis, Xe arrondissement, 1962-1966," 1966, 1382W 93, Archives de Paris.

²⁹ In 1974, these two taxes were reformed in France and took the name and form that they continue to hold in 2012. The *taxe mobilière* became the *taxe d'habitation* and the *taxe patente* became the *taxe professionnelle*.

the name of the business (and often its owner's name), the amount of taxes they owe on the value of the space they are renting, information on the type of business, and other information written by the tax authorities when someone was neglected to pay their taxes or moved addresses.

The 1960 records for the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood are both exciting and problematic.³⁰ Extensive marginalia reveal a great deal about the functioning of the neighborhood, but the records are incomplete, since only two of the four or five original registers exist on file at the *Archives de Paris*, the Paris Municipal Archives. The missing volumes contain the records of several important streets, including the central street of the neighborhood, the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. As the streets were listed in alphabetical order and not by location, the available records contain a geographically disparate group of entries.³¹ Although the range of streets is limited, the volume of data they contain on the functioning of residential and economic life in the neighborhood is impressive—for the seven streets there were 1,694 entries in the registries, of which 1,149 were households and 545 were businesses and non-profit organizations.

The most recent census, taken six years earlier in 1954, revealed that there were 25,402 people registered living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, less than one percent of the entire population of Paris of over 2.8 million people.³² It was a dense part of the city, with 528 people per hectare living in the Porte Saint-Denis administrative *quartier*, a rate almost 25 percent higher than the rest of the 10th arrondissement and 61 percent higher than the city's average of 328 people.³³ Of the 80 administrative *quartiers* in Paris at that time, only ten were denser.³⁴

³⁰ See "Taxes patentes et mobilières, Porte-Saint-Denis," 1960, 2477W 11,12, Archives de Paris. As there are no page numbers in these registries, citations will note the address at which the entry was recorded. In the two volumes, entries are filed alphabetically by street and numerically within each street.

³¹ The entries include the following streets: Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, Passage Brady, rue du Château-d'Eau, Passage du Désir, rue de l'Echiquier, rue d'Enghien, and rue de la Fidélité.

³² One arrives at these numbers by counting the population in the *îlots* included in the neighborhood in Table 2. More people lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis than this official number, as individuals who had recently migrated to the neighborhood could have been registered at their family's home elsewhere in France if they preferred to vote there. In addition, people who lived in any of the neighborhood's 55 hotels—with weekly and monthly rents—would have also been missing from this count. See Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*, 244; *ibid.*, 249.

³³ Paris, for administrative reasons, had 80 official neighborhoods, or *quartiers*, four in each arrondissement. Each had its own police station; other administrative functions were separated by these artificially defined areas, such as voting districts. Almost all of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood, as I define it, is included in the Porte Saint-Denis administrative *quartier*, except for *îlots* 1583 and 1584, both of which are in the Porte Saint-Martin neighborhood. Although it included some *îlots* that do not figure into the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood, the composition of these *îlots* did not differ significantly from those in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, as the extra *îlots* participated in much of the same economy and their rents were similar. See Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*, 10; *ibid.*, 234.

³⁴ These *quartiers* were found in the following arrondissements: one in the 2nd, three in the 3rd, one in the 4th, one in the 9th, one in the 10th, two in the 11th, and one in the 18th. See Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*.

The demographic composition of the Faubourg Saint-Denis is representative of Paris in 1954. The majority of the neighborhood's residents were women, who made up 55 percent of the population, on par with the average in the entire arrondissement and all of Paris.³⁵ Forty-five percent of its working residents were women, which was also the average in the arrondissement and in the city as a whole. Children and adolescents aged 19 and under made up 20 percent of the neighborhood's population (on par with the city average), and girls were more numerous than boys in every age category under the age of 19 (but barely so at the worldwide average of 51 percent of the population). Only 10 percent of the neighborhood's population was over the age of 65, almost two-thirds of whom were elderly women, again on par with the city average. The low rate of elderly men was largely due to the longer average lifespan of women as well as to the death of so many 18- to 35-year-old men during World War I, many of whom would have been over the age of 65 in 1954.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis also had a significant immigrant population, with 30 percent more foreigners living in the neighborhood than the city average. The entire city had an official population of 135,701 foreign nationals, or 4.7 percent of its population.³⁶ The Faubourg Saint-Denis was the home of 1,554 foreigners, or 6.1 percent of the neighborhood's population.³⁷ At the same time, only 0.4 percent of the neighborhood's population—92 people—were Muslim Algerians, a rate less than half of the city average.³⁸

It is difficult to speak with confidence about the nationalities of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's immigrants. The names of French nationals can be found in historical voting registers that are accessible to the public, but foreigners do not appear in these records. The 1954 individual census records, when opened to public viewing in 2035, will provide precise information about the nationalities, immigration status, and household composition of foreigners in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. We can, however, try to venture guesses about the nationality and identity of the foreigners who lived in this neighborhood by examining names in the tax records.³⁹

³⁵ The male-female and age breakdown is not available in each *îlot*, but we know that for the entire 38th *quartier* (the Porte Saint-Denis, depicted in the map in Figure 5), 55 percent of the population was female. The following statistics in this paragraph come from the entire Porte Saint-Denis neighborhood's numbers. For all the statistics in this paragraph for Paris as a whole, see *Ibid.*, 8. For the Porte Saint-Denis, see *Ibid.*, 242–252.

³⁶ Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*, 7.

³⁷ Although the census records reveal only a small amount of information about foreigners living in Paris, much of it determined by contemporary political issues, they offer a general picture of the immigrant residents of the neighborhood. The census counted foreigners—those without French passports—and Muslim Algerians, who were French but considered potential enemies of the state.

³⁸ As the police feared an uprising from Algerian Muslims, who were French citizens, they were counted in a separate category, and numbered 32,580 in the entire city, or 1% of the population.

³⁹ There are many disclaimers that should be brought up before continuing, as one must make underlying assumptions about individuals to proceed. It is very difficult to understand the culture or identity of immigrant or ethnic communities using the historical records available to us.

In trying to identify people's backgrounds by simply looking at names in a register, we are bound to make a considerable number of errors in the attribution of nationality. A name that could be a marker of a certain nationality, ethnicity, or religion does not necessarily identify an individual's nationality. A man with a Greek name could have been the fourth generation of his family to live in France and could have been as French as someone with a typically French name. He might also have had only one Greek great-grandparent and was otherwise seven-eighths French or some other nationality. Even if this man were a Greek national and had exclusively Greek ancestry, we would not know if he identified with that nationality and if his community—their friends, co-workers, and acquaintances—belonged to the same national or ethnic group. In the Faubourg Saint-Denis, where many residents had traditionally Jewish first and last names, their names could mark ethnic, religious, or cultural identity rather than nationality.

For someone with a typical Jewish name, for example, we might misidentify whether that person was Jewish, either religiously or culturally. Even if the person did identify as Jewish, we still cannot know which country he was from, what languages he spoke, if he minimized his Jewish identity because he was atheist and wanted to become French and forget his Jewish past.⁴⁰ It is possible that one-quarter of his family were once Jewish and he had held onto the last name without having any attachment to the Jewish religion or culture.⁴¹ At the same time, a careful examination of these names can suggest a tentative, but useful picture of the people living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Jewish names are the most common identifiable names in the neighborhood's tax records. When performing a conservative attribution, 170 of the 1149 heads of households—almost 15 percent—in the Faubourg Saint-Denis had traditionally Jewish last names.⁴² These residents were spread out evenly throughout the neighborhood, although certain buildings contained large numbers of Jewish names, such as 86 Passage Brady and 17 rue de l'Echiquier.⁴³ The Faubourg Saint-Denis had a varied mix of people with Jewish backgrounds, each with different origins, beliefs, identities, and communities. Yet while there were clearly many people

⁴⁰ Identity for Jews was especially complex during this difficult moment in the shadows of World War II. During the war, people of Jewish ancestry, regardless of their identity, were told that they were Jewish based on other people's perceptions and often killed for this part of their identity. For an excellent study on an ethnic community that both integrated with the local population in Paris and maintained its own cultural identity, see Leslie Page Moch's study of Breton migrants: Leslie Page Moch, *The Pariahs of Yesterday: Breton Migrants in Paris* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).

⁴¹ Many of the Jews in Paris in the 1950s had moved to France in the 1930s and had either survived concentration camps or had gone into hiding during the war. Others came to France from Central and Eastern Europe for the first time after the war, seeking to establish a new home after their traumatic experiences or to join family members already living in France. For more on Jews in France during the 1930s and World War II, see Michael Robert Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Susan Zuccotti, *The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

⁴² See "AdP 2477W 11,12."

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 86 Passage Brady & 17 rue de l'Echiquier.

of Jewish origin living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, it would be inaccurate to call it a Jewish neighborhood.

The records show 150 names suggesting Eastern European origins, while twenty suggest North African, Sephardi origins. Of the 170 total surnames, 60 had traditional Jewish first names as well, written to resemble Hebrew and Yiddish pronunciations. Eight were named Chaïm and six were named Israël, with other men named Sabetay, Abram, Yakob, Issac, Isaac, Zelick, Mendel, Szmul, and Pysach, and women named Ghitla, Chaja, Chana, Szloma, Getla, and Sura. Even more—78 of the 170—had traditional French first names, with six named Maurice, five Albert, and others named Jean, Jacques, Charles, Henri, Arlette, Yvonne, Germaine, Irène, and Cécile. It is also impossible to know if the 60 people with traditional Jewish names were called by a French name in public, just as we do not know if those with French first names and Jewish last names were called by a different nickname.

Mr. S.K., for example, a dressmaker who lived in the neighborhood and worked out of his home, was listed as Samuel in the tax registry. But when he had not paid his taxes, the tax authorities wrote in the margins of the register that he was also known as Smul, spelled closer to a Yiddish pronunciation.⁴⁴ A widow, whose last name was spelled as it would have sounded in a number of countries in Eastern Europe—Frydman—was named Marie-Louise in the tax register, a name far from being Jewish.⁴⁵ A woman with an Ashkenazi name who ran a business in the neighborhood was referred to as R. Wajntal in the tax records, although the name of her company was given a French tint in a different register of businesses, where it was referred to as Vandal.⁴⁶ While there were clearly people of Jewish origin living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, their Jewish identity was complicated and difficult to gauge from this information.

The comments of two interviewees, one in 2010 and one in 2012, suggest this same complexity when looking back at their lives in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1950s and 1960s. Mme N.T., who has lived since 1958 at her current address near the corner where Nono and Anna Karina walked, stated that although being Jewish played a very important role in whom she married, her family did not practice Judaism.⁴⁷ She had come as a child from a secular family in Berlin that had moved to France in 1938, just before World War II began. She and her mother had survived the war while living on the rue d'Aboukir, just on the other side of the Grands Boulevards from the Porte Saint-Denis, and she chose to marry a Polish Jew living in Paris just

⁴⁴ Ibid., Passage Brady. As French privacy laws protect individuals' identities in tax documents for up to 60 years after their publication, all individuals will be referred to by their initials as found in the registries. In addition, I will use the following abbreviations before initials to show the sex and marital situation—if known—of the individuals: "Mr." for men, married or not; "Mme" for Madame, or any woman married or with unknown marital situation; "Mlle" for Mademoiselle, or an unmarried woman; and "Vve" for Veuve, or a widowed woman. I use these terms because the archives use them and I want to communicate their content to the reader (although they use "M." for "Mr." and I have chosen the English version in order to avoid any confusion with someone with M. as their first initial).

⁴⁵ Ibid., Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 23 rue d'Enghien. *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine* (Paris: Société Didot-Bottin, 1959), 377.

⁴⁷ N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., November 18, 2009."

after the war when she was barely eighteen years old. Although her husband sometimes went to a synagogue three blocks away on the rue Ambroise Thomas in the 9th arrondissement, she explained that this was in order to visit his parents, who were practicing Jews. Mme N.T. did not attend a synagogue, spoke French mixed in with a little German and Yiddish at home, and, while she and her husband worked with many other Jews in the clothing manufacturing business in the neighborhood, their friends were generally not Jewish.⁴⁸ Those who were Jewish were almost always non-observant, she said.⁴⁹

Other Jews living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, while non-observant, felt cultural ties to Jews in the neighborhood. Mr. L.K., who was born shortly after the war into a Jewish family, spent a good portion of his childhood just across the street from N.T. His father ran a small fur manufacturing business at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis from the mid-1950s until 1963, when he decided to open a retail shop on the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière.⁵⁰ Although Mr. L.K. still identifies as an ethnic or cultural Jew, he has lived a secular life since he was born. His family's milieu in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, however, was much more culturally Jewish than N.T.'s, as he recalls his father spending a good deal of time with other Jews in the neighborhood who also worked in the fur industry, and with whom his father would often speak in Yiddish.⁵¹ The complex combination of language, religion, ethnicity, and culture together shaped the experience of L.K.'s family in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

A cousin named J.G., once an employee of L.K.'s father, recalled how the Jews in the fur business tended to congregate together, especially at the Café des Fourreurs, a hangout and business center for the fur industry.⁵² He remembers feeling different from many of the people he knew there, though, since he had been born in France in 1928. Most of the other Jews working in the industry had only moved from Poland or Germany in the late 1930s or after the war and chose to speak Yiddish and German before French. They also tended to practice the religion more than he did, he said. Others, too, belonged to Jewish political parties that had meeting places in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Hapoel Hamizrachi, for example, a religious Zionist workers' party that was represented in various Israeli parliaments in the 1950s, had a branch at 4 rue Martel.⁵³ While there were many people in the neighborhood who were Jewish, their sense of identification varied significantly from one person to the next. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was not a Jewish enclave, but rather a place where many Jews lived.

No other easily identifiable group had such a presence in the registers of the neighborhood. Other groups were present in 1960, though there is little evidence to suggest community among them. Twenty-five Italian names were listed, most with French first names. These people could have been living in France for generations, however, and could have had little

⁴⁸ Mme N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012" In person, September 6, 2012.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Mr. L.K., "Interview with Mr. L.K, March 15, 2012." In person, March 15, 2012.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Mr. J.G., "Interview with Mr. J.G., September 13, 2012" In person, September 13, 2012.

⁵³ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 631.*

Italian identity. Seventeen heads of household had Spanish last names, though only four had French first names—these people could have come from any Spanish-speaking country, although Spain is the most likely as Spanish immigration to France was strong in the 1950s. Three of these households were listed together in one building at 10 rue d’Enghien, all of which were led by someone with a non-French first name, suggesting a potential relationship.⁵⁴ Eleven heads of household had Armenian names, most of whom had French first names. A few other types of names are also identifiable: three Vietnamese households (all with Vietnamese first names), one Slavic household (with a Slavic first name), three Polish names (none of which seemed Jewish, though they could have been), two Romanian names (both with French first names), one Dutch name (Dutch first name), three Flemish names (all with French first names), four Arabic names (all with Arabic first names), one Greek name (with a French first name), one Hungarian name (Hungarian first name), and one Iranian name (French first name).

There is complementary evidence of foreigners living in the neighborhood that is not captured in the tax registers, found in police records from 1960 for the nearby Porte Saint-Martin administrative neighborhood.⁵⁵ Mr. G.E., born in Midoun, Tunisia in 1930 and of Tunisian nationality, was a painter of buildings who was stopped on his scooter in the Porte Saint-Martin jurisdiction by police and fined for not having insurance. He lived at 29 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, but was staying at someone else’s home so he would not have turned up in the *taxe mobilière* records for the street.⁵⁶ Another man, Mr. L.V., had been taken in by the police because he did not have papers to reside in France. He was born in Pazin, Italy, a city in Istria that became part of Yugoslavia after World War II. Mr. L.V. had taken Yugoslav citizenship and had been living at 30 rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin, very close to the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station.⁵⁷

To combine the rest of the names in the tax registers into a single category—French—would also be inaccurate. The postwar period was a moment of intense migration to Paris from all corners of France that brought people with different cultures together in the melting pot of the city. Grouping these migrants together would not be useful. It is impossible to say which of the households in the Faubourg Saint-Denis were recent arrivals to Paris from other parts of France, but it is clear that there were a considerable number of them, as the neighborhood had a large concentration of *hôtels meublés* and *hôtels garnis* that offered weekly or monthly room rentals.⁵⁸ These were affordable, convenient housing options for many people, especially those who had

⁵⁴ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 10 rue d’Enghien.

⁵⁵ The Porte Saint-Martin neighborhood was located just to the east of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, beginning at the Boulevard de Strasbourg. Similar records from the Porte Saint-Denis police precinct are missing from the Paris police archives.

⁵⁶ “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1960-1961,” 1961, CB 38 116, Archives de la Préfecture de Police, entry #703, April 14, 1960.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* entry #845, April 25, 1960.

⁵⁸ For more on the *hôtel meublé* and *hôtel garni*, see the most thorough study to date, Alain Faure and Claire Lévy-Vroelant, *Une chambre en ville*

recently moved to the city, as they offered accommodation without the hassle of all of the paperwork necessary to sign a rental lease on an apartment. While a *hôtel meublé* would have provided renters with a sparsely furnished room, a *hôtel garni* was more like a boarding house and usually provided sheets, utilities such as an in-room sink and shared bathroom, and sometimes cooked meals.⁵⁹

The 1954 census indicates that in Paris there were a total of 8,110 *hôtels meublés* accommodating 101,120 households and an estimated 300,000 people, or about 10 percent of the city's population.⁶⁰ Even though there were half as many *hôtels meublés* as there had been in 1929, the population they housed remained equal. After having suffered through a crisis in the 1920s and 1930s, when *hôtels meublés* had been forced to close due to vacancies, the 1940s and 1950s was a boom period for those that remained open. In this postwar moment, many migrants piled into Paris from all across the devastated French countryside and from many of its destroyed cities, seeking cheap, easy lodging.

Of these *hôtels*, more than 70 were based in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, likely housing 2,500 to 3,000 people if their occupancy rates were on par with those of other *hôtels* in the city. Although most were dispersed throughout the neighborhood, the largest concentration was on a very small street, the rue Jarry, a few hundred feet north of the rue du Château-d'Eau between the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the Boulevard de Strasbourg. On this street, which was only 300 feet long, six of the twelve buildings were *hôtels meublés*, with basic names such as the *Hôtel de France*, *Hôtel Jarry*, *Crystal-Hôtel*, and *Hôtel du Jura*, the latter suggesting that it had once housed seasonal workers coming to Paris from the Jura, an eastern region of France.⁶¹ This, along with the tax records and census data about the Faubourg Saint-Denis, suggests that a diverse group of both immigrants and migrants lived in the neighborhood in the first fifteen years after the war.

A closer look at the census statistics of the working population indicates that the neighborhood's residents were generally from the lower-middle (*petit bourgeois* in French) or working classes. People who lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis tended to work with their hands at low-paying office jobs or at small retail shops. The largest labor group of the Porte Saint-Denis's residents was "*employés*," or salaried people working in offices, who were not skilled

⁵⁹ As *hôtels garnis* are a subset or type of *hôtel meublé*, I use the term *hôtel meublé* to describe both, unless specifically noted. For a discussion of the definition, see "La notion d' « Hôtel Meublé »", September 2008, http://www.habitatindigne.logement.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/4231_notion_hotel_meuble_7_cle13cc23.pdf.

⁶⁰ Faure and Lévy-Vroelant, *Une chambre en ville*, 241–244; Claire Lévy-Vroelant, "Les garnis et meublés dans l'évolution du logement de 1850 à l'aube du 21ème siècle : Grandeur et décadence" (presented at the Journée nationale d'échanges, Paris, October 1, 2004), http://www.habiter-autrement.org/27_Hotels/contributions-27/historique_hotels-garnis.pdf. Permanent residents at these *hôtels* who paid monthly rates over a period of time were the only hotel residents to show up in the *taxe mobilière* records, including a few individuals who are discussed later in the chapter.

⁶¹ *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 505.

workers or executives. Secretarial and other low-paying office work, or a salaried position at a shop, would qualify someone as an *employé*.⁶² This group made up 20 percent of working residents, while “*artisans et petits commerçants*,” or craftsmen and small shop owners, made up 16 percent of the working population.

Qualified workers—usually trained in a specific manual craft and paid a salary—and their supervisors made up 17 percent of the neighborhood’s workforce. Lesser-trained workers and apprentices, often performing physical, untrained work at irregular intervals—such as low-paying construction or transport jobs—made up 10 percent of the workforce. Low-paying service workers, such as janitors and housekeepers, were also prevalent among residents, consisting of 14 percent of the working population. The liberal professions—doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors—and senior management (“*les cadres supérieurs*”) in the private and public sectors, combined with mid-level jobs (“*les cadres moyens*”), including nurses, teachers, technicians, and mid-level management positions together comprised only 14 percent of the workforce in the neighborhood.

In this sense, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was a typical Parisian neighborhood in 1954, as a significant majority of its active population was employed in lower-middle-class and working-class jobs.⁶³ Just over 77 percent of its working population—two percentage points higher than the city average—had these types of jobs.⁶⁴ At the same time, the percentage of middle and upper-middle class workers was slightly lower than the city average of 18 percent.⁶⁵ Like most of Paris, most of the Faubourg Saint-Denis’s working residents were not well paid.

From the tax records, it is possible to examine the working history of some of the neighborhood’s residents, most of whom worked outside of the neighborhood. A portion of these residents had well-paid, salaried jobs from the government. Mme P.C., who had lived at 5 rue de l’Echiquier but moved away sometime before taxes had been collected in 1961, had worked at the *Direction des Télécommunications de Paris*, an office of the state-run telephone company.⁶⁶ This most likely was a salaried job as an *employé*, as the state hired most of its workers on salary.⁶⁷ P.C.

⁶² Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Données statistiques sur la population et les logements de la Ville de Paris : Répartition par îlots, 1957*, xxx.

⁶³ The *taxe mobilière* records corroborate much of this evidence. Although these records do not generally include information on residents’ professions, when a given household did not pay its taxes, the authorities would often search for the head of the household at his or her previous place of employment. This is the only extant piece of evidence of the jobs of people who lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis but worked in other parts of Paris. The stories these records leave are concise and provide very little information about the lives and practices of the individuals discussed. Together, they reveal more information about the type of people who lived in the neighborhood, their work lives, and how they used and moved through Paris.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 7–8.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 5 rue de l’Echiquier.

⁶⁷ She could have also worked as a qualified manual laborer, though that is less likely considering that she was working at the office of the telephone company, which employed fewer craftsmen than switchboard operators and secretaries.

commuted to her office on the Boulevard de Vaugirard in the 15th arrondissement in the southwestern part of the city.

Others had jobs in the press that demanded a high level of education. Mlle O.N. and Mr. G.B., most likely a couple, lived together at 28 Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle and worked as journalists at the satirical political monthly *Hara-Kiri*, which in 1970 became the infamous *Charlie Hebdo*. G.B. was one of the two founders of *Hara-Kiri* in 1960.⁶⁸ The French state surveilled him and O.N., however, not only because they had not paid their rental tax, but because their magazine attacked the government relentlessly.⁶⁹ G.B. and O.N. commuted to the magazine's offices in the 8th arrondissement from the 10th and were found by the taxman in two separate places, G.B. in the 16th arrondissement and O.N. in the 9th. Eventually all was resolved as the authorities were subsequently notified that the couple had paid their taxes at their new apartment on the rue Choron in the 9th arrondissement, a ten-minute walk northwest of their previous residence.

Some of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's residents who worked outside of the neighborhood had traditional working-class jobs. Mr. J.B., who had a permanent room at the *Hôtel de l'Echiquier*, a *hôtel garni* at 1 rue de l'Echiquier on the corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, worked at a metal workshop on the rue la Fayette near the Cadet metro stop, a ten-minute walk from his home.⁷⁰ Mr. A.P., who lived in one of the small apartments above the Passage Brady, worked until July 1958 at a woman's home or business at 17 rue de Transvaal in the 20th arrondissement near the Parc de Belleville.⁷¹ As this was almost completely a poor, working-class neighborhood at the time, it is likely that A.P. performed a trade or manual labor for his employer.

Others changed jobs over time.⁷² Mme D.B., who lived on the Grands Boulevards at 28 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, had once worked at La Casita, a dance club that was known for its *bals*, or dance parties where young people would go to dance to the latest music by Elvis Presley or other rock and roll musicians.⁷³ Her commute was less than a five-minute walk from her home. At some point in the late 1950s, however, she changed jobs to work at another American-influenced venue in Paris, the *Bowling des Champs-Élysées* on the avenue of the same name in the 8th arrondissement.⁷⁴ This bowling alley likely had a bar and dancing. D.B. probably worked as a bartender or server at both places, as she continued to work for the same type of business and

⁶⁸ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 28 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

⁶⁹ The publication would be banned on two separate occasions during the 1960s.

⁷⁰ On Mr. G.B., see *Ibid.*, 1 rue de l'Echiquier. For hotel name, see *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 366.

⁷¹ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 79/85 Passage Brady. Although one cannot know their relationship, both A.P. and his employer had Spanish names.

⁷² Surely many workers changed jobs, but these are the only records available of job changes of residents in the neighborhood.

⁷³ See advertisement for La Casita in "Le Marché du Travail," *France-Soir* (Paris, January 24, 1961).

⁷⁴ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 28 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

was not paid a large salary. She earned 500 NF per month at the bowling alley and most likely lived in a small apartment, as it had a very low rental tax base.⁷⁵

Mr. R.W. also commuted a short distance to his work as a bartender, server, or cook at *Aux Armes de Colmar*, an Alsatian bar and brasserie across from the Gare de l'Est train station at 13 rue de Strasbourg (later renamed the rue du 8 Mai 1945).⁷⁶ Trains at the station head east to Colmar, Metz, Strasbourg, and Luxembourg and had served the front lines during World War I. Not surprisingly, a community of Alsations had a significant presence around the station. Although one cannot draw any conclusions from R.W.'s Germanic last name and French first name, it is possible that he worked with other Alsations and that this bar was a meeting point for a larger community.

One other example exists of an individual's employment record. Mr. B.Z. had lived at 12 rue de l'Echiquier and when he did not pay his taxes, the government looked for him at the *Restaurant Copenhagen* on the Champs-Élysées in the 8th arrondissement.⁷⁷ They did not find him at this job, however, and eventually discovered that he had switched jobs and apartments. Even though his place of employment had moved even farther away from the Faubourg Saint-Denis—his new job was at an auto repair shop at 16 rue Watteau near the Place d'Italie in the 13th arrondissement—B.Z. chose to remain in the neighborhood and had moved just a few blocks away at 41 rue des Petites-Ecuries near its intersection with the rue d'Hauteville. For B.Z., like many others in the Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rest of Paris and its region, home and work were in separate parts of the city out of choice. He could have moved closer to his new job in the 13th and paid approximately the same for an apartment but chose not to.

Mr. R.B., who like J.B. also lived at the *Hôtel de l'Echiquier*, worked at Société Centofruit, a produce seller based on the edges of the wholesale food market at Les Halles.⁷⁸ Exactly what his job entailed is not known, but it could have involved moving boxes of produce, negotiating wholesale contracts, or selling to individuals who did their shopping just outside of the wholesale market, where they could get fresh produce at low prices. What we do know is that his home was conveniently located for him to get to work and was tied to the market, the economic core of the city in 1960.

Another resident of the *Hôtel de l'Echiquier*, Mme. J.L., worked in the 2nd arrondissement just near the Sentier metro station, but she was not involved with either the garment district or Les Halles.⁷⁹ J.L. worked at the corner of the rue Saint-Sauveur and the rue Montorgeuil at *Les Tréfileries de la Seine*, a company that cut processed metal into wire. Whether she worked with her hands or answered the telephone, we do not know.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 28 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 66 rue du Château-d'Eau.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 12 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 1 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 1 rue de l'Echiquier.

Even though the Faubourg Saint-Denis was itself part of Paris's central garment district, two residents, one of whom also owned a tailoring business in the nearby Passage du Désir, worked as tailors far away from their homes and the garment district itself. Mr. M.F., who had a business at 32 passage du Désir where he may have lived in another family member's apartment (records indicate that he only paid tax for his business, not housing), also worked, at least until August 1961, at Maison Charles, a clothing manufacture company in the 13th arrondissement.⁸⁰ Mr. C.D., who lived at 4 rue de l'Echiquier, worked as a tailor in the 17th arrondissement, also far away from the Sentier.⁸¹

These residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis lived in a Paris that spread far beyond the confines of the neighborhood in which they lived. Their jobs first suggest that other neighborhoods in Paris contained a wide range of businesses in addition to their well-known industries (metal cutting near Les Halles and the Sentier, for example). On the other hand, they also show that people who worked in an industry that employed many people in the neighborhood near their home—clothing manufacturing in the case of the Faubourg Saint-Denis—often took jobs in less conveniently located parts of the city that were not even usually associated with that same industry. One cannot make assumptions about neighborhoods and proximity in a large city like Paris where its people are constantly moving and commuting.

Tax records also shed light on the women living in the neighborhood. As it was customary to list a woman as the head of a household in the registries only if no men lived with her, we know that of the 1,149 households listed in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 335, or 29 percent, consisted only of women. Of these, widows led 107, or 9.3 percent of all households, while single women led only 22, or 2 percent. The large number of widows is not surprising, considering that the number of women over the age of 65 living in the neighborhood was almost double that of men.

Some of these women—single, married, or widowed—worked from home in this thriving garment district. The tax records reveal this by showing payments of a *taxe patente*, or a tax on businesses, out of the same apartment for which they paid a *taxe mobilière*, or home rental tax. The type of business they ran is clearly listed in these cases. Still others, instead of paying the *taxe patente*, chose to pay fees to the *chambre de métiers*, a state-run organization that represented artisans both for individual administrative and legal tasks and as a collective group, a sort of loose union of independently employed craftsmen. When a household chose to pay the annual fee to belong to the *chambre de métiers*, it was noted in the registry.

Out of the 335 women who led households, 34 operated businesses in the neighborhood. Of these 34 businesses, thirteen were based out of the women's homes and were generally small.⁸²

⁸⁰ Ibid., 32 passage du Désir.

⁸¹ Ibid., 4/2 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁸² We can ascertain the potential size of these businesses by the tax base for the rental tax of an apartment and, for businesses that had salaried employees, the number of employees. This can give us a general idea of the sizes of

Although there were likely many more women who worked out of their homes without informing the government, these records suggest the type of work done in homes in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Most of these businesses were tied to the garment industry, though the type of work and size of business varied significantly. Two women made knitwear in their homes, one, Mme. S.D., in a small apartment, another, Mme. C.G., in a larger one, though both women had no salaried workers on the books.⁸³ Mme S.A., however, hired one worker for her small clothing workshop in her apartment and Vve H.K. employed nine in her larger operation.⁸⁴ Mme J.V. made furs out of her medium-sized home, as did Mme G.C. in a smaller home in the same building.⁸⁵

Women also manufactured other goods besides clothing in their own homes. Vve S.C., for example, was a professional jewelry polisher in her small apartment at 4 rue de l'Echiquier.⁸⁶ Another widow, Vve B., repaired and sold watches out of her apartment on the rue du Château-d'Eau.⁸⁷ Also on the rue de l'Echiquier, Mme M.J. manufactured toys by herself in her miniscule apartment.⁸⁸ Nearby on the rue d'Enghien, Mme G.K. and one employee manufactured knick-knacks, or *bimbelotrie*, as it is called in the French registries.⁸⁹ It is difficult to guess what they produced in G.K.'s apartment and whether it was small accessories for the garment industry or plastic children's toys.

Some women chose their homes with commercial considerations in mind. Certain buildings—like 28 rue d'Enghien where J.V., G.C., and S.D. all had their homes and workshops—attracted many manufacturers and artisans and provided them with a central location easily accessible to buyers. A number of buildings like this existed in the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood, each filled with manufacturers' workshops and homes. There was an especially large concentration of these in the area west of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis along the rue d'Enghien, rue de l'Echiquier, rue des Petites-Ecuries, and rue de Paradis.

A few women who worked out of their own homes also rented rooms to individual tenants. They offered options similar in style to that of the *hôtel meublé*, in that these sublets were sparsely decorated, often ill-equipped, and, most importantly, accessible without the paperwork of a normal lease. Six women were listed in the registries as servicing these rooms, much as a hotel manager would. Four of them lived in the neighborhood and worked out of their

businesses, even though it is likely that many of these women hired workers off the books who might have worked in their own homes or in the owner's home. It is important to note, however, that it is possible that these women did not live in the apartments where they paid the *taxe mobilière*, as they could have sublet them off the books at night while they slept elsewhere. We will have to trust the accuracy of our source and assume that this was not a regular affair.

⁸³ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 28 rue d'Enghien & 12 rue d'Enghien.

⁸⁴ The abbreviation "Vve" refers to *veuve*, or widow, in French. Ibid., 8 rue d'Enghien & 26 rue d'Enghien.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 28 rue d'Enghien.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 4 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 78 rue du Château-d'Eau.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 13 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 27 rue d'Enghien.

apartments and two commuted to the Faubourg Saint-Denis from unknown homes. No men were listed as performing this type of work.

While men living in the neighborhood did not rent rooms, they did often work at home. Tax records showing a male head of household working out of home also include instances where the businesses were family affairs, such as Mme N.T. and her husband's clothing manufacturing business.⁹⁰ Slightly more frequently than women's businesses based out of the home, these male-run businesses were tied to the garment industry. Of the 70 household-based businesses listed under men's names, 44 were in clothing manufacturing and ten others in related industries, such as jewelry and leather products. Most of the large workshops run out of the home were in clothing manufacturing, but the biggest, with twenty employees, was a leather product manufacturer run by Mr. M.B. at 5 rue d'Enghien.⁹¹

There were numerous furriers and clothing manufacturers with one to five employees based in homes, mainly scattered along the rue de l'Echiquier, rue d'Enghien, and the Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle. Tailors were the most common of the small businesses, with eleven entries based out of individuals' apartments, five of which had one salaried employee and six that were single-man enterprises. All of these were based out of small apartments, with the exception of one medium-sized space. Some people also performed more specialized trades in the production process, such as Mr. M.E., who worked as a pearl driller at his home at 12 rue d'Enghien, and Mr. C.H., who designed fabric patterns.⁹² Some provided services to garment-related businesses—Mr. J.M., for example, ran a business out of his apartment specializing in being a middle-man of sorts, a representative who connected wholesale producers to retailers and individual customers.⁹³

In studies of the Sentier and other garment districts, scholars often ignore work unrelated to the clothing industry because it is not the neighborhood's principal economic activity.⁹⁴ Although it is clear that the clothing industry remained dominant among residents who worked from their homes, the tax registries also depict the diversity of the work undertaken by entrepreneurs involved in other types of businesses out of their home.

At the top of the economic ladder, two licensed engineers based their businesses out of their apartments in the neighborhood, one on the rue d'Enghien and another on the rue de l'Echiquier.⁹⁵ Mr. J.A., a lawyer, lived on the Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, and Mr. F.P., an accountant, lived on the rue d'Enghien, each employing one worker, probably a secretary.⁹⁶ Two

⁹⁰ N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., November 18, 2009."

⁹¹ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 5 rue d'Enghien.

⁹² Ibid., 12 & 28 rue d'Enghien.

⁹³ Ibid., 28 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

⁹⁴ See the fascinating study of the Sentier as a garment district in the 1980s, Solange Montagné-Villette, *Le Sentier, un espace ambigu* (Paris: Masson, 1990).

⁹⁵ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 18 rue de l'Echiquier & 8 rue d'Enghien. Mr. L.F., at 18 rue de l'Echiquier, though, died on December 20, 1959.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 28 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle & 11 rue d'Enghien.

doctors—a generalist and an oral specialist—each worked out of their apartments along the Grands Boulevards.⁹⁷

Others with less lucrative jobs also worked from home. A photograph retoucher, Mr. M.G., may have had a darkroom in his home on the rue d'Enghien in 1960.⁹⁸ Mr. G.J., living in the Passage du Désir, was a professional wallpaper hanger.⁹⁹ He would have worked in people's apartments and in shops, though the majority of work for a wallpaper hanger in Paris was done on the street and in the metro, where he pasted the newest advertisements to the wall. An electrician lived at 19 rue de l'Echiquier, a house painter (though in Paris there were more buildings, apartments, and offices than houses to paint), and two garbage and detritus merchants operated businesses out of homes in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁰⁰

There are also examples of individuals who chose to live in the same building or in close proximity to their place of work, but maintained a separation between the spaces devoted to work and their home.¹⁰¹ A number of clothing manufacturers on a stretch of the Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle (numbers 6, 8, and 10) had apartments above and small workshops on the street.¹⁰² In another instance, P.D., who lived on the rue de l'Echiquier, ran a tie manufacturing business in another space in his building.¹⁰³ Even more commonly, people ran a shop or business on street level and lived upstairs in the same building. It had been common practice throughout Paris since the eighteenth century for shopkeepers to receive an apartment above their shop as part of its lease.¹⁰⁴

For the residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960, work and home were at times interchangeable—a considerable number of them chose to work in their homes or close by out of convenience or necessity. They performed a wide variety of tasks, most tied to manufacturing in one form or another, while others performed local services, such as running hotels or renting rooms. The majority of residents, however, worked outside of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, spending large portions of their days in other parts of Paris. In the next chapter, the non-residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960 will show their faces. They managed, worked at, and consumed at the majority of businesses, both manufacturing and retail, incontestably shaping the neighborhood. The majority of the neighborhood's users in 1960 lived elsewhere, far beyond the limits of the 10th arrondissement.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 26 & 12 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 30 rue d'Enghien.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 32 passage du Désir.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 19 rue de l'Echiquier; 72 rue du Château-d'Eau; 7 rue de l'Echiquier; 15 rue d'Enghien.

¹⁰¹ This is shown in the tax records by separate listings for an apartment and a business under the same name at a given address. Others may have also worked in the building where they lived but only those who had their names on the lease of both apartment and workplace are visible.

¹⁰² "AdP 2477W 11,12", 6, 8 & 10 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 14 rue de l'Echiquier.

¹⁰⁴ These shopkeepers will be discussed later in the section on public space and shops.

CHAPTER 2

Rhythms, pt. 2

Non-Residents and the Public Spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1960

The residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis played a significant yet small part in the life of the neighborhood in 1960. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was a part of Paris, like many others, that was inextricably tied to the rest of the city and the suburbs. The story of the Faubourg Saint-Denis during this period leads us far beyond the geographic borders of the neighborhood and into the rest of Paris. Self-sufficient neighborhoods have never existed in Paris. That is not the way any big city works; no part of an active city stands alone. Not only did the economy of this neighborhood rely on other areas of the city sometimes miles away, but the people who gave it life, too, were deeply tied to places one would not expect, far away from the city center. This is a story not only of manufacturing workshops and their employees or of shops and their shopkeepers, but also of the other part-time workers, street vendors, boxers, dancers, drinkers, and walkers who passed through this neighborhood.

Interior Public Spaces: Non-Residents, Businesses, and Workers

Much of the same type of work that was done in the homes of residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis was also performed in the workshops, offices, and small factories in the neighborhood. Information about these businesses that employed the largest number of people in the neighborhood but lay hidden from the street, behind the closed entrance doors in the courtyards and long passageways or above the ground floor of buildings, comes not only from tax records but also business listings.¹ These businesses, located outside of the homes of residents, employed the majority of their workers from beyond the limits of the neighborhood. These men and women came to the Faubourg Saint-Denis on a daily basis and spent a large portion of their day there, invisible to those on the street.

These businesses and their employees performed the same types of work done in people's homes in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, although their size and diversity were greater than home-run enterprises. The people who led and staffed most of these businesses working in the neighborhood's principal industries lived outside of the neighborhood. These industries used the

¹ The most important book of business listings was the Bottin, published annually in three different formats—alphabetical (like the White Pages), by business type (like the Yellow Pages), and by address. In 1960, these guides did not list phone numbers. See *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine* (Paris: Société Didot-Bottin, 1959). The telephone company also published an annual phone book including individuals and businesses, though this guide in 1960 was much less complete due to the low penetration of telephones.

Faubourg Saint-Denis as an economic and social hub, a meeting point for businesses and their quotidian employees.

The majority of the 434 businesses without storefronts that were listed in the tax registries were tied to the clothing industry. Just over 30 percent of these businesses (131 in total) were involved in some aspect of clothing manufacturing and production, with another 3 percent (twelve businesses) working in clothing sales, and over 4 percent (nineteen businesses) involved in business-to-business work with manufacturers, such as equipment sales and sales representatives.² Although the industry was focused on ready-to-wear products, eight *couturiers*, or custom clothing manufacturers, were listed in the tax records and many others in the business listings.³

The fur and leather industry is an excellent example of how an industry with a complex structure made use of the intimacy and proximity of an urban neighborhood.⁴ Most of its businesses employed only a handful of people; none of the ten furriers mentioned in the 1960 tax records had more than two employees. The industry was not very visible to people passing through the neighborhood, as it operated out of only a handful of retail storefronts.⁵ Nonetheless, most of its French operations were based in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, especially around the rue d’Hauteville and the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière. To those involved in the fur industry in 1960, the definition of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood would have been more expansive, including the area to the west of the rue d’Hauteville. For Mr. L.K., the borders of the *quartier des fourreurs* or furriers’ neighborhood, which included large parts of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, were slightly different. It was focused farther to the west near the rue d’Hauteville and the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière and the neighborhood’s meeting point, the Café des Fourreurs.⁶

This fur neighborhood contained all types of businesses tied to the industry. Some companies produced fur coats, collars, vests and other pieces in the neighborhood. Of the 30 manufacturers listed in the annual directory tied to the fur industry in 1968, 28 were located in the 9th and 10th arrondissements in the area surrounding the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière.⁷ Of

² There were numerous *représentants* listed both in the tax and Bottin records, scattered throughout the neighborhood, though it is not clear which businesses they represented. For a number of sales representatives on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis between the arch and the rue de l’Echiquier, see *Ibid.*, 875.

³ For several along the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, such as Escamela and Gérard at number 16 and Zychlinski at number 19, see *Ibid.*

⁴ While the leather industry was present in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the majority of its work was farther east in the 10th arrondissement near the Canal Saint-Martin, Place de la République and the Jacques-Bonsergent metro station. See “Le Marché du Travail,” *France-Soir* (Paris, January 24, 1961).

⁵ The tax records list only one fur-related business with a storefront, in this case a retail fur shop. It lay farther east, just outside of the Château-d’Eau metro station. “Taxes patentes et mobilières, Porte-Saint-Denis”, 1960, 2477W 11,12, Archives de Paris, 59 rue du Château-d’Eau.

⁶ Mr. L.K., “Interview with Mr. L.K, September 13, 2012,” In, September 13, 2012.

⁷ I have used the 1968 edition because I have been unable to find earlier editions. This should not prove to be a problem as I am using its information only to paint a general portrait of the industry in the 9th and 10th

these, eight were found on the rue d'Hauteville, two on the rue de l'Echiquier, one on the rue des Petites-Ecuries, and one on the rue de Paradis. B. Erdmann, a company based at 13 rue d'Hauteville, for example, produced a variety of articles from rare and unusual pieces of fur, such as *astrakan* (Astrakhan), *pattes d'ocelots* (ocelot paws), *pattes de renards* (fox paws), and *queues de visons* (mink tails).⁸ Others, such as I. Karnoouh, based just down the street, specialized in making all of its pieces out of mink tails.⁹ Other producers specialized in fur hats, such as Wajzer at 10 rue des Petites-Ecuries, though most hat-makers also made other types of fur products as well.¹⁰ Jacques Jekel, at 22 rue de Paradis, made fur and leather coats for children.¹¹

Other businesses focused on different aspects of the production process, selling to all of the fur manufacturers in the neighborhood. For example, almost ten businesses in the neighborhood, mainly on the rue d'Enghien, rue des Petites-Ecuries, rue d'Hauteville, and rue de l'Echiquier, focused on selling a variety raw animal skins, including *sauvagines* (waterfowl), *fouines* (beech martens), *putois* (polecats), *taupes* (moles), *écureuils* (squirrels), *blaireaux* (badgers), and *rats musqués* (muskrats).¹² To keep these skins in good condition, one of the two refrigeration centers for animal skins in France, the Kohn Brothers' *Frigorifique Hauteville*, was located at 60 rue d'Hauteville.¹³ Two businesses in the neighborhood specialized in the processing of furs. They would clean them, remove their fat, soften them, and shape them depending on their customers' needs. Six businesses in the 9th and 10th arrondissements—including one on the rue d'Hauteville, one on the rue d'Enghien, and one on the passage des Petites-Ecuries—specialized in the final part of the production process. They bought the extra pieces and refuse left over by manufacturers to resell to lower-end producers who had use for scraps.¹⁴

Others provided machines, tools, and lining fabrics made of silk, canvas, or synthetic materials. Leobry, located at 35 rue d'Hauteville, advertised its wide range of natural and man-made materials both for linings and for the threading used to stitch them to the furs. They also sold specialized needles and other tools in order to be a one-stop shop where manufacturers in the neighborhood could come to purchase all their necessary products.¹⁵ Almost half of these types of businesses in France were based in the 9th and 10th arrondissements, close to their biggest customers.¹⁶

arrondissements. The 1960 edition should not have been much different. If anything, the fur industry was more concentrated in this part of Paris in 1960 before fur sales started to drop over the course of the 1960s. *Annuaire des pelletiers et fourreurs, 53e édition*. (Paris: Winckelmann, 1968), 9–12.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13–14.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹² *Ibid.*, 42–43.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁶ *Annuaire des pelletiers et fourreurs*.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis was also a center of fur-specific sewing machine sales.¹⁷ Fur manufacturers needed specialized equipment, as normal sewing machines were not powerful enough to work on thick animal skins. The companies based in the neighborhood that sold these machines to manufacturers offered a variety of services to their customers after they purchased the equipment, including repairs and the sale of related accessories, including thread. The entire production process of fur-making was self-contained in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Beyond the production and sale of furs, the industry press was also present in the neighborhood. *L'officiel de la fourrure* and *Fourrures Magazine*, two important trade publications, were both based on the rue d'Enghien.¹⁸ The offices of four *commissionnaires* working with the fur industry in France were also located in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁹ They negotiated import and export duties as well as transportation and customs logistics.

According to Mr. L.K. and Mr. J.G., all of the different participants in the industry interacted at its hub, the Café des Fourreurs on the rue du Faubourg Poissonnière.²⁰ There, bosses signed contracts with buyers, workers ingested caffeine and alcohol, jokes were shared, and American dollars were illegally traded. From the end of World War II until the mid-1960s, people in the industry trusted only dollars, a period during which the French franc had lost 90 percent of its value. J.G. remembered these as the hardest of times in the industry when everyone worked very hard—ten to fourteen-hour days were normal—to earn just enough to get by. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was a national hub for the fur industry as well as the general clothing manufacturing industry, with businesses and professionals working to fulfill all aspects of production and sales. As a hub, the Faubourg Saint-Denis drew quolidians to work in the industry's businesses every day.

This was also true for the crystal, porcelain, and silver industries, which were centered around the Baccarat factories on the rue de Paradis.²¹ The annual commercial directory published in 1959 suggests that the entire rue de Paradis was filled with these businesses, with almost two hundred on that street alone, serving every part of the industry from production to sales.²² One either had to move one's business to the rue de Paradis or visit it frequently to participate in these industries in Paris.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁸ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 377.*

¹⁹ *Annuaire des pelletiers et fourreurs, 14.*

²⁰ L.K., "Interview with Mr. L.K, September 13, 2012"; Mr. J.G., "Interview with Mr. J.G., September 13, 2012," In person, September 13, 2012.

²¹ This industry is almost completely missing from the tax records, as the rue de Paradis is not listed in the available registries. Even though the industry had an enormous presence in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, both in terms of production and wholesale and retail sales, there is only one example of a silverware production company in the tax records, Saglier Frères at 12 rue d'Enghien with 49 employees, the fourth largest company in the tax registers in terms of employees. "AdP 2477W 11,12", 12 rue d'Enghien.

²² *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 725–727.*

The Faubourg Saint-Denis also had a very important printing industry in the 1960s. *Le Parisien Libéré* one of the most important newspapers catering to workers in France, was produced and printed in the neighborhood. This was a serious operation; it was the largest business in the neighborhood with 256 employees working in multiple locations.²³ Its offices were based at 18 rue d'Enghien in a massive Art Deco building from the 1920s as well as across the street at number 19. Its printing press was based at 7 rue des Petites-Ecuries, just a few hundred feet away, where another periodical, "Point de Vue," was also printed.²⁴ In the same building on the rue d'Enghien, Clichés Laureys, the fifth-largest company listed in the tax register with 43 employees, produced prints from metal plates in its headquarters.²⁵

Because these businesses all shared technology and talent, they had reason to operate near one another. Three medium-sized letterpress printers operated just down the street from *Le Parisien Libéré*—at 10, 12, and 24 rue d'Enghien—using the technique of applying ink to arranged groups of metal or wood letter blocks to create prints.²⁶ Another, the Imprimerie Perrier, operated in the cour des Petites-Ecuries, just between the offices and print shop of *Le Parisien Libéré*.²⁷ A lithographic printer operated just around the corner on the rue de l'Echiquier, most likely specializing in graphic prints, as the lithographic process allows for much greater detail and flexibility in printing color images than the letterpress.²⁸ Just as in the fur industry, the distribution of goods was also handled by businesses located in the neighborhood, including a company with six employees on the rue d'Enghien.

The industry spread beyond its core center. Another offset printer, Baudry, was located north of the rest at 4 rue Martel.²⁹ Five more printers of unknown size were located just two blocks away on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis near the Porte Saint-Denis—the Imprimerie du Globe and Photogravure Trouvé at number 14, Denoux at 15, L. Toupet at 16, and Société Nogret-Guyot at 18.³⁰ Also on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, where it meets the rue d'Enghien, was a specialist printer, Pégahaire, which produced brochures.³¹ Two printers operated at 54 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, one of which specialized in letterpress.³² Down the street, in between the cour des Petites-Ecuries and the rue d'Enghien lay the offices R. Lecomte, who printed only on transparent materials, like plastic and glass, for decorative purposes. A number of other printers operated farther north on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, past the rue des Petites-Ecuries, and two manufacturers of printing machines, Comag and Scapin, were based at

²³ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 18/16 rue d'Enghien.

²⁴ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 752.

²⁵ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 17 & 19 rue d'Enghien.

²⁶ Ibid., 10, 12 & 24 rue d'Enghien.

²⁷ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 751.

²⁸ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 24 rue de l'Echiquier.

²⁹ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 631.

³⁰ Ibid., 875.

³¹ Ibid., 876.

³² Ibid.

91 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.³³ The neighborhood offered those looking to order prints many different options, all in close proximity.

Independent artists and small workshops in the neighborhood also participated in the printing industry, as some of the work in the printing process was outsourced. One artist, Mr. Deroulineau, specialized in lithography.³⁴ He etched designs into stone and metal plates that could then be printed onto paper at any of the printers in the neighborhood. A widow, Vve Hubert-Denous, ran a small business near the Porte Saint-Denis that worked in *composition*, or typesetting.³⁵ Her company would have been hired by letterpress printers to put together final page forms that could then be printed. She likely stored thousands of metal letters in various fonts that could then be organized into a page of type for a printer. It would have been important for this type of work, when outsourced, to be performed in close proximity to the printer, as the final page forms would be heavy and cumbersome to transport.

Like the fur, porcelain, silver, and garment businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, businesses tied to the printing industry used their proximity to each other to their benefit. Together, they attracted a pool of capable employees to the neighborhood and a wide range of customers who knew they could come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to get printing done for all types of projects.

The local indoor economy was not limited to the aforementioned dominant industries. Other significant lines of work in the Faubourg Saint-Denis were building repairs and construction with 25 businesses (five of which had more than nine salaried employees), administration (including notaries, accountants, and customs officials) with 23 businesses, and the arts (including photographers, painters, a graphic designer, and a tapestry repairer) with seventeen businesses. Among other types of firms, there were also two architects, three engineers, six public relations agencies, three music publishers along the rue de l’Echiquier, as well as four dealers in garbage, three of whom specialized in selling it wholesale and one who specialized in finding it. Many of these businesses, such as the music publishers, likely benefited from close proximity to each other. It could have been convenient for clients—composers and musicians—who wanted to speak with multiple publishers before agreeing to a contract to license and sell their music. The publishers may also have licensed one another’s music for publication or for recordings of performances. Short walking distances, especially during an era before widespread telephone use, would have been very important to ensure the success of their ventures.

Other businesses were even more specialized. Mme J. Néant at 16 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis made fake mustaches, beards, and wigs, while Piles Wonder, a company located at 55 rue du Château-d’Eau, stored and repaired industrial-size batteries.³⁶ Mme K.Z., a photographer whose darkroom was located on the Passage Brady, also worked outside of her establishment as

³³ Ibid., 876–877.

³⁴ Ibid., 876.

³⁵ The size of her business is unknown. Ibid., 875.

³⁶ Ibid.; “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 55 rue du Château-d’Eau.

an itinerant photographer.³⁷ The national trade union of retail sellers of umbrellas, parasols, and canes was based at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.³⁸ An entire building, almost across the street at 81 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, was dedicated to refrigerator and water heater manufacturing by the J. Gaillard company.³⁹ Bérard at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis worked in a trade that no longer exists in the center of Paris—the company produced ink reservoirs used in calligraphic writing with dip pens.⁴⁰ Cassemiche, another company at the same address, made artificial fruit for fashion displays and interior decoration, while Mme H.B. at 12 rue d’Enghien, E. Moirignot at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, and Vve Tribot at number 14 on the same street, made artificial flowers.⁴¹ M. Macaux, at 65 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, cut and sold fabric for artificial flowers and clothing.⁴²

Three businesses on the lower part of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis specialized in *plissage*—pleating fabric with complex folds for special types of garments—and most likely served clothing manufacturers throughout Paris who needed this work done.⁴³ And Mme S.B at 24 rue d’Enghien, Hue at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, and Gérard-Maçon at 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis prepared feathers for couture clothing, three of the remaining few companies in this dying art who continued to work in Paris in 1960.⁴⁴ Four other businesses that performed the same type of feather work for the clothing industry operated on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, as well as one wholesale seller of untreated feathers located at 65 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, who furnished the producers.⁴⁵ These specialties that existed in few other places continued to do business in the Faubourg Saint-Denis because their work was still valuable in an economy that continued to rely on small producers and vendors in the city center. While most of these trades would have been invisible to someone walking down the street, they were some of the crucial drivers of the neighborhood’s economy and social life, as they brought many people to its spaces every day.

Despite a clear picture of the businesses and industries inside buildings in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, it is difficult to say with any precision the range of activities and jobs that someone who worked in the neighborhood performed. We do not know much about how businesses in the neighborhood were operated. The salaried workers listed in the tax registers only represent a tip of the iceberg for many of these businesses, since the Faubourg Saint-Denis and its industries

³⁷ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 94/88 Passage Brady.

³⁸ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 876.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 877. The numbers on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis do not line up perfectly, so number 81 is not directly across the street from number 80.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 875.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*; “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 12 rue d’Enghien.

⁴² *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 876.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 875.

⁴⁴ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 24 rue d’Enghien; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 875–876.*

⁴⁵ See *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 876.*

were a center for part-time and temporary work. In the early 1960s, the neighborhood was a place where people could come to find jobs of all types in a wide array of unskilled and semi-skilled positions.

The distinction among owner, salaried employee, and part-time employee is administrative in origin and ignores the flexibility of employment in a neighborhood like the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960. Some people held multiple positions at the same time—the nephew of a bar’s owner could have held a small stake of the business, managed the bar on the days his uncle was not around, yet still received the regular salary of an employee—and many moved from one type of work to another more frequently than the government could register.⁴⁶ It is also difficult to distinguish between producers and sellers, as it was very common for shop owners in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Paris to be involved in both activities.⁴⁷ Most of this complexity is lost to us, especially in a neighborhood like the Faubourg Saint-Denis where business and hiring practices were fluid, flexible, and ever-changing.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis was a center for low-paid, temporary work in clothing manufacturing. Although information about these positions is missing from traditional archives, classified ads from *France-Soir*, a popular newspaper, paint a picture of the diversity of the range of employment options available in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁴⁸ Some looked for well-trained workers, but the majority of jobs were available to people without previous experience. While the same types of clothing industry jobs were also listed in other parts of the city and in the suburbs of Pantin and Asnières, the Faubourg Saint-Denis remained a central location for work in the clothing industry. Certain parts of the neighborhood were industry hubs—three different businesses in the classified ads on the same day in March 1961 offered jobs at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, a large complex of buildings housing many different types of commercial spaces, including Mr. L.K.’s father’s fur workshop.⁴⁹ Frequent job openings in these hubs helped make the neighborhood visible in the classified ads as a central site in Paris to find work.

⁴⁶ Claire Zalc, *Melting shops: une histoire des commerçants étrangers en France* (Librairie Académique Perrin, 2010), 28.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁴⁸ Although the majority of the jobs in Paris offered in these classified ads were entry-level service jobs, especially for typists and secretaries, the Faubourg Saint-Denis did not offer any of these. The most common ads in Paris were for “Operateurs IBM” (computer operators) and “dactylo,” “mécánographe,” or “sténodactylo” (different kinds of typewriters). At the same time, there were other kinds of manual labor offered around the city, including for electricians, elevator operators, repairmen, and hot water specialists. According to Mme N.T., *France-Soir* was the most widely read paper by workers looking for jobs. She recalled her husband taking trips to the *France-Soir* headquarters on the rue Réaumur in the 3rd arrondissement—just ten minutes away by foot from their business—to submit listings when her workshop needed to hire workers. He would tell her about the crowds of unemployed people waiting outside the office every afternoon, hoping to be among the first to purchase the new edition. Mme N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012,” In person, September 6, 2012.

⁴⁹ One business sought very qualified female workers to produce high-end dresses. Another company, Colonna, needed workers to man its leather stitching machines, and a third, Eitex, looked for women to operate sewing machines to make dresses. “Le Marché du Travail,” *France-Soir* (Paris, March 9, 1961).

The jobs available in the neighborhood were open to both men and women. In January 1961, for example, Alar, at 28 rue des Petites-Ecuries, a company that specialized in making raincoats, was looking for “Receptionnistes, Finisseuses”—female receptionists and clothing finishers.⁵⁰ Fischer, a clothing manufacturer at 35 rue d’Hauteville, placed an advertisement the same day for a “surfileuse,” or a woman who specialized in making hems.⁵¹ Weisblum was searching for a pants “mécanicienne”—again female—to work the sewing machines at his small factory at 9 rue du Château d’Eau just a few blocks east of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Frank, who operated at an unspecified company at 48 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, sought three types of female workers: “FINISSEUSES Pantalons POCHEUSES APPRENTI(e)” —female pant finishers, and one trainee in pocket-making who could be either a man or woman. Many were available only to women, who were considered to be specialists in finishing clothing products. Mme N.T. could not give a practical reason to explain this beyond a culture in the industry that dictated that women perform some tasks and men others.⁵²

Other ads made no gender distinction when hiring. Dubarry, operating out of 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, wanted a cutting assistant for children’s clothes, while Roalis sought unspecified workers at its dress-making workshop just outside the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station.⁵³ Médard, a manufacturer on the rue de l’Echiquier, sought men or women to operate their machines to make coats.⁵⁴ Scartout, looking for the same type of machine operators for their workshop just a block away on the rue des Petites-Ecuries, insisted on “very qualified” workers.⁵⁵ CPT, based at 34 rue d’Hauteville, specified that they wanted some workers to cut fabric for *prêt-à-porter* dresses and others to do the same work for bespoke projects.⁵⁶

Just as often, companies in the Faubourg Saint-Denis hired employees to work from home—“ouvriers à domicile”—in order to save on space and costs. All workers, regardless of where they worked, were paid by the piece, not by the hour. This gave employers a financial incentive to hire off-site workers, who, when they worked in their own personal spaces outside of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, would have come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to deliver products and contract work.⁵⁷ All of the employers searching for sewing machine operators wanted them to produce garments at home, whether they be dresses for Karine at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, female cutters for dresses and jackets for TYNA at 46 rue de l’Echiquier, or women to do general work for Boveco at 15 rue Martel.⁵⁸ Both Redlich at 49 rue d’Hauteville and J. Mett at 10 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle were hiring “jupières”—female skirt-makers—to work from home,

⁵⁰ “Le Marché du Travail.”

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Roalis was located at 1 Blvd de Strasbourg. Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ It is unclear if Scartout offered higher wages for its job. Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ J.G., “Interview with Mr. J.G., September 13, 2012.”

⁵⁸ “Le Marché du Travail.”

while Eloé, on the other side of the neighborhood at 43 rue du Château-d'Eau, wanted workers to sew underwear lining from the comfort of their homes. One company, based at 3 rue de Paradis, looked specifically for “façonniers,” or workers who manufactured independently but were supplied raw materials by the company to fill their orders.⁵⁹ Another, run by a man name Szonek, offered work to an employee who could produce pants either at the workshop or at home. Szonek even offered to help find housing for potential employees, implying that he expected some of his potential recruits to have recently arrived in the city. He was looking for low-paid employees who would come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis for their first job in Paris.

Presumably some of these home-workers were listed in the tax records as residents in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, who ran small ateliers performing outsourced work out of their apartments. Keeping in mind, however, that these classified ads were read throughout the region, that many other parts of Paris and its suburbs had clothing manufacturing workshops, and the cost incentives to produce goods farther away from the city center, it is likely that the majority of people who performed outsourced work for companies based in the Faubourg Saint-Denis worked elsewhere in the region.

For most of these job advertisements, the writer left only a name and address as contact information, without a telephone number. While this may not be surprising considering the low level of telephone penetration in the neighborhood at the time, it is significant because it suggests that aspiring workers were required to visit the neighborhood in order to seek employment. Frank, at 48 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, left a first name and address for the three employees he sought, as did Karine, who offered work to dressmakers out of their homes, as well as Scartout on the rue des Petites-Ecuries.⁶⁰ Esmar, who sought workers to do tailoring and coat work for him out of their homes, suggested that job-seekers visit him at 15 rue d'Hauteville with examples of past work. One can assume that job-seekers frequently walked around the Faubourg Saint-Denis with samples to prove their worth to future employers. Hiring decisions would have been made during face-to-face meetings, many of which were held in cafés, according to L.K.'s stories about the fur business in neighborhood cafés.⁶¹

Most workers in the Faubourg Saint-Denis's businesses did not live near their places of employment. From the daily registry in 1960 of the police precinct in the Porte Saint-Martin administrative neighborhood, one can ascertain information about workers through the complaints of thefts and other crimes committed against them at or near their workplaces.⁶² Georges Tisserand, for example, a Biarritz-born, 34-year-old watchmaker working at 39 rue du Château-d'Eau, just to the east of the Château d'Eau metro station, lived in the 18th arrondissement near the northern edge of Paris in a poor neighborhood at 3 impasse Massonnet,

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ “Le Marché du Travail”; “Le Marché du Travail.”

⁶¹ L.K., “Interview with Mr. L.K, September 13, 2012.”

⁶² These registries are missing for the Porte Saint-Denis administrative neighborhood. See “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1959-1960”, 1960, CB 39 115, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

sandwiched between the Boulevard Ornano near the Simplon metro station and the train tracks leading outside the city from the Gare du Nord.⁶³ Just down the street from Tisserand's office at 46 rue du Château-d'Eau lay the printing facilities of the Imprimerie Neger. One of their employees, René Falcini, lived a fifteen-minute walk east of his job at 7 rue Oberkampf in the 11th arrondissement.⁶⁴ Mr. J.G., who in 1960 was living on the rue du Temple in the 3rd arrondissement, also lived a similar distance from his job cutting skins for fur at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁶⁵

Other companies—often intermediaries—based in the neighborhood offered employment opportunities in other parts of Paris, and in other countries. These opportunities led other types of job-seekers to the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Bureau 75, based at 91 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, posted a job that called for a 25- to 40-year-old man who was free immediately to search for clients in other parts of France for another unnamed company.⁶⁶ The requirements were few, but precise. The man had to look the part—"bonne présentation" was necessary—and possess a driver's license. The job paid a fixed salary of 1,200 NF per month, plus sales commissions, a reasonably good salary at the time.⁶⁷ Another company, based at 90 Boulevard de Magenta, on the edge of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, advertised a variety of jobs without giving any specifics beyond asking for a "Voit. si possib."—a car, if possible.⁶⁸ Based near the Gare de l'Est and the Gare du Nord, this company would have been perfectly located to attract people coming from the suburbs or other parts of Paris who were looking for any type of unskilled work.

Press, a professional job search company based at 31 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle near the corner of the rue d'Hauteville, offered more specialized, yet equally diverse jobs.⁶⁹ While they placed one ad for a typical job in the Faubourg Saint-Denis—a "cutter-designer" specializing in rainwear and sportswear—they also advertised a job for an apartment sales representative at a "quickly growing" company. The latter specified that the applicant should have good looks and have similar previous experience, since he or she would be selling expensive new apartments. For neither of these jobs would the work have been performed in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Other jobs offered by Press specified a location far away from Paris. One company sought mechanics and receptionists for an automobile distribution and importation company. Any potential employee would have to be under the age of 35 and ready to move to "Afrique Noir," or "Black Africa," as some referred to sub-Saharan Africa at the time. These job search companies turned the Faubourg Saint-Denis into a passageway from the garment district to fancier Paris

⁶³ "Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1960", 1960, CB 39 116, Archives de la Préfecture de Police, entry #697, April 13, 1960.

⁶⁴ Ibid., entry #713, April 15, 1960.

⁶⁵ J.G., "Interview with Mr. J.G., September 13, 2012."

⁶⁶ "Le Marché du Travail."

⁶⁷ It cost 200 NF per month to rent a furnished room in the neighborhood, for example, and it would be much cheaper outside of Paris where this man would have worked.

⁶⁸ "Le Marché du Travail."

⁶⁹ For all of the following advertisements, see Ibid.

neighborhoods or to a garage thousands of miles away in Africa in the midst of the upheaval brought by decolonization and independence.

Public Space: Shopkeepers, Street Vendors, Shoppers, Boxers, Dancers, and Other Users

The people discussed so far—residents, business owners, employees, and job seekers—were all users of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. They spent a considerable amount of time in the neighborhood, most of it indoors, where they slept, cooked, sewed garments, typed letters, printed newspapers, shaped crystal vases, made telephone calls, bathed, joked, and kissed. Each person participated in different communities present on the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, whether these communities were tied to a close circle of friends or family or to the company or industry in which he or she worked. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was where they lived—for some just a small portion of their day, for others many hours every day, year after year. Much of their time was spent in private spaces, inaccessible to the public from the street. While the people who worked in the businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis spent their workdays with other people, most of that time was spent behind closed doors.

Workers in these businesses also used the public and semi-public spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis—its streets, cafés, stores, schools, sidewalks, metro stations, and benches. Even if they chose not to buy food at its grocery stores, coffee or wine at its bars, or newspapers at its shops, they had to walk down its streets and experience its street life. Some of these individuals were without a doubt very visible on the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis and actively participated in its public life. They knew its vendors and other people who used the neighborhood, and formed many of their important social relationships with them on its streets. They may also have had a deep knowledge of the neighborhood's practices and customs.

Certainly the people who ran and worked at street-level businesses had, on average, more contact with the neighborhood, since they worked in a semi-public space where anyone could walk in the door. Many of these shops extended out onto the streets, selling products along the sidewalk in order to attract more customers. Others, such as street vendors, worked on the street all day. Many of their businesses and workers had constant contact with the different people of the neighborhood. It was they who were the everyday face of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Petits commerçants, or small shopkeepers, have been viewed negatively throughout the twentieth century in France. On a basic level, they were often viewed—especially in Paris—as price gougers who inflated the costs of common goods in order to hurt their customers. In the mid-nineteenth century, Charles Fourier, the early socialist philosopher, epitomizing the anti-shopkeeper viewpoint, wrote that they practiced “the art of buying for three francs what is worth six and of selling for six francs what is worth three.”⁷⁰ Fourier's viewpoint was widely held—French society often viewed shopkeepers as people who added no value to the economy and who

⁷⁰ Quoted in Alain Plessis, “Les français et le monde de la boutique,” in *La révolution commerciale en France: du Bon Marché à l'hypermarché*, ed. Jacques Marseille (Monde Editions, 1997), 12.

stole from hard-working people. On a political level, public discourse lumped shopkeepers together as stereotypical members of the Fascist movement in the 1920s and 1930s and later viewed them as staunch supporters of the Nazi-allied wartime Vichy government.⁷¹ After the end of the war, they were again viewed as part of a rejuvenated right wing in the 1950s as supporters of the Poujadiste movement, which protested against the modernization of France. By the early 1980s, the press again singled them out as the leaders of a nascent extreme right group, the Front National, led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. Historians, too, have frequently viewed shopkeepers in the twentieth century negatively. Many historians, especially those taking economic or Marxist approaches to their work, have seen small city shops as part of an old-fashioned, inefficient economic model bound to lose out to larger, more efficient retail distribution and sales in the form of centralized wholesale markets, supermarkets, and department stores.⁷² Eschewing an economic or political approach and examining shopkeepers through a social lens views their role in France and in Paris in a more favorable light. Shopkeepers, through their stores, restaurants, cafés, and bars have provided the setting for community and neighborhood in Paris over the last few centuries.⁷³ To study neighborhood life in Paris on its streets demands a study of shopkeepers.

It is important to note that the shop owners—those whose names were listed on tax records—did not always manage their shops. In many cases they did, but frequently an owner or the owning corporation would hire an outside manager. In a study of neighborhood life it is the manager and his or her employees—those who participated in neighborhood life—who played the crucial roles. Unfortunately, finding information about them is very difficult when their shops were in an infrequently documented part of Paris.

The numerous shops of the Faubourg Saint-Denis employed many workers, but played a less important economic role in the neighborhood than its manufacturing businesses. In the tax records for the Faubourg Saint-Denis, which were limited to the streets listed in the two registers that still exist, 210 businesses had storefronts.⁷⁴ These storefront businesses made up 32.7 percent

⁷¹ See Claire Zalc, “Les petits patrons en France au 20^e siècle ou les atouts du flou,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’histoire* 114, no. 2 (2012): 53.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ See *Ibid.* For more on the distaste of small shops in France in the 19th and early-20th centuries, see Plessis, “Les français et le monde de la boutique.”

⁷⁴ The following statistics come from compilations of the tax registries. Although it is never specifically listed which businesses have storefronts, those that did were almost always listed first in the registries for a given address. It is also possible to ascertain this information by the type of work the businesses perform, as described in the registries, and to corroborate this information with the Bottin street listings, though these also do not show which businesses had storefronts. The Bottin listings are important because they list the name of the shop, not the name of the owner or company that owns the shop, which are listed in the tax records. In addition, as very few of the buildings have changed since this period, it is possible to examine the buildings now to see how many businesses have storefronts at each address. It is also important to remember that these records are missing the main strip of shops on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the large number of crystal and porcelain dealers in the rue du Paradis area. These can be examined, albeit with less precision, using the Bottin listings. See “AdP 2477W 11,12.”

of the businesses in the neighborhood—more than two-thirds of the businesses resided inside buildings and courtyards. This meant that a typical building in the Faubourg Saint-Denis had two storefront shops and four other businesses operating inside. Storefront businesses employed only 25 percent of salaried employees in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, hiring fewer per business than those that lay inside buildings. In total, these 210 storefront businesses hired fewer than 500 employees, relative to the approximately 1,500 employees hired by the other businesses in the neighborhood.

Women owned 50 of the 210 storefront businesses (24 percent of the total) and might have managed many more. Of the 50 businesses, nine were owned by widows—three bars, one hotel, one bakery, two hair salons, one shirt shop, and one bathroom and kitchen tile shop. None of the other 41 businesses was owned by an unmarried woman. Women had higher rates of ownership of newspaper and stationery shops—seven of the sixteen listed in the tax records, or 44 percent, were run by women. They represented approximately one-quarter of owners—on par with their general ratio—in most types of storefront businesses, such as bars, cafés, restaurants, hotels, and clothing sales. From these statistics it is clear that women played a significant role on the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Although the shops on the street did not make up the majority of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's manufacturing-focused economy, they did contribute to a vibrant world of commerce. The largest type of commerce in the neighborhood, by far, was that of clothing sales. Of the 210 businesses listed in the tax registries, 51, or 25 percent, were clothing shops, with an additional six jewelry and watch stores. These shops, just like the clothing producers of the neighborhood, varied greatly in the type of products they sold. Some specialized in underwear or lace, others in menswear. All the storefronts listed—except one wholesale lingerie shop at 21 rue d'Enghien—sold to retail customers.⁷⁵ The streets and arcades in the Faubourg Saint-Denis were for shopping, not wholesale buying. Wholesale buying took place either inside the buildings' courtyards or in other parts of Paris.

Most stores employed a small workforce, if any. Twenty of the 51 vendors had no employees other than the owner and only four had more than five employees. Thirty-four of the 51 businesses were not even registered as official companies. They were simply operated by the individual owner, who rented the workspace and assumed liability of the business. Of the eighteen clothing businesses owned by an entity, all but one were structured as SARLs or *Société à responsabilité limitée*, the French equivalent of a limited liability company (LLC). This was the easiest and cheapest type of company to set up and to run, as its annual fees to the French state were low and it did not require a board of directors and other time-consuming protocol. Only one business, Etablissements Caty de Paris, a small clothes shop at 21 rue de l'Echiquier, was legally structured as a more expensive and complex *Société anonyme* (SA). The SA is the French equivalent of an American corporation, or C-corp, the structure of choice for most publicly

⁷⁵ Ibid., 21 rue d'Enghien.

traded companies.⁷⁶ Etablissements Caty was possibly a small, local shop of a slightly larger company, as it would have been unlikely that a small store in the Faubourg Saint-Denis would have been part of a larger chain.

While some street-level businesses were owned by local residents, most were not. Only four of the owners of the neighborhood's 51 clothing shops lived directly above of their shop and rented that apartment as part of their shop's lease. Just off of the corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, Mme A.P. ran her lingerie shop, Eldé, and lived above it.⁷⁷ Mr. D.K. also lived above his menswear store, "David," on the Grands Boulevards, as did his neighbor, Mr. H.D., who ran a store selling shirts.⁷⁸ Farther north in the neighborhood on the Passage du Désir, a widow, Vve Z., also lived over her ladies' hosiery, underwear, and shirt.⁷⁹ Two other owners of clothing shops in the Faubourg Saint-Denis rented apartments in the same building independently from their shops' leases.⁸⁰ One can safely assume that these four owners managed the day-to-day work of their businesses and spent a fair amount of time in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

The covered *passages*, or shopping arcades, of the neighborhood—Passage Brady and Passage du Prado—were both dedicated to clothing shopping. Mme Léa Carta, a shopkeeper on the Passage du Prado where she had lived from when she was a child in 1939 through the 1990s, remembered this period fondly in a television interview in 1994.⁸¹ The *passage*'s "forty boutiques, each one more beautiful than the next," offered "an amazing selection of clothing," and the shopkeepers and tailors were "fantastic people."⁸² Her statistics were not far off—31 of the 34 shops on the *passage* sold clothing and of the 31 clothing shops, 24 sold ladies clothing.⁸³

⁷⁶ Ibid., 21 rue de l'Echiquier.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 74 rue du Château-d'Eau. *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 266.

⁷⁸ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 10 & 12 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle; *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 191.

⁷⁹ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 33 Passage du Désir.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 59/61 Passage Brady & 63 rue du Château-d'Eau.

⁸¹ Pierre Alain Beauchard, "Sécurité : quand les citoyens se prennent en charge," *Français, si vous parlez* (France 3, May 12, 1994), Institut national de l'audiovisuel.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 793.



Figure 1. Two images of the interior of the Passage du Prado from the 1950s, with Mme Carta shown selling a coat on the left.⁸⁴

According to Mme Carta, the Passage du Prado's environment was convivial—shopkeepers hung out together in the corridor to pass the time and to attract customers. The shopkeepers displayed large amounts of clothing outside their shops along the front windows in order to attract customers (see Figure 1). The feel inside the *passage* was similar to that of a flea market or a bazaar, where customers are overwhelmed with purchase options in a small physical space, with vendors fiercely competing for sales.

The *passage* was particularly crowded on Saturdays, when people from all over the region would come to purchase affordable clothing primarily for formal events like weddings and communions.⁸⁵ The majority of business, though, came from wholesale intermediaries from the suburbs, or *coursiers*, who would come to the neighborhood to buy for their wholesale clients. Mme Carta explained that it was a credit business—the *coursiers* would also come on Saturday, and would get credit from shopkeepers if they settled their past bills. The *coursiers* would have to pay a premium to purchase on credit, but would receive a 30 percent discount as wholesale customers. For the shopkeepers to know who was a reliable, credit-deserving customer, they would shout out in their local slang term, “bobi,” which informed the other vendors that they could trust a specific *coursier* who was going from shop to shop doing his or her buying. Their interactions with the different shopkeepers were often public and observed by everyone inside the *passage*. Even though they were competing against each other, there was camaraderie in the shared culture of the clothing marketplace inside the *passage*.

Many of the courtyards and interiors of the buildings also operated as quasi-public spaces. Although businesses with street-level entrances were much more accessible to the public than those based inside of buildings, many businesses relied on people crossing that threshold. This was especially easy in the 1960s, when most buildings' doors were left unlocked without security keypads.⁸⁶ The numerous doctors, dentists, and physical therapists in the Faubourg

⁸⁴ Beauchard, “Sécurité : quand les citoyens se prennent en charge.”

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Jean Abou, “Interview with Jean Abou, October 3, 2012.” In person, October 3, 2012.

Saint-Denis demanded their patients come inside private buildings to visit them. They often had their offices in mixed residential-commercial buildings and behind doors that would have resembled those of apartments. Their patients needed to have access to these private interiors of the buildings, as did the clients and suppliers of many other types of businesses based inside buildings and their courtyards.

Certain addresses, devoted to commercial establishments with few or no apartments, were even more open to the public. For example, 80, 91, and 108 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, consisted of multiple buildings and courtyards filled with different manufacturing companies, sales representatives, and other businesses. These functioned as office buildings and manufacturing centers combined into one for easy access by the public. At number 91, one found the offices of a number of construction companies that worked on large public projects and specialized in concrete production and prefabricated metal structures; small tailors; two printer manufacturers; a cartoonist; a photography lab equipment supplier and repair company; a rubber and plastic product manufacturer; the offices of *La Presse Libre*, a periodical; a real estate agent; a fortuneteller, R. Vivier; and a psychic, Madame Jane.⁸⁷ The clients, suppliers, and employees of these companies—from an administrator working for the city who came to negotiate a contract for concrete to be used in building public schools to someone looking to have his or her mind read—passed each other in the hallways, staircases, and courtyards of these buildings in the neighborhood, not necessarily with meaningful contact, but with regularity. Each address like this was a small city unto itself.

Where did owners and managers of some of these businesses live? Owners of cafés, restaurants, and hotels, more frequently had apartments in the same building as their establishment. These businesses demanded work at all times of the day, especially late into the evening, and therefore it was more convenient for owners and managers to remain on the premises. Of the owners of the 33 restaurants, cafés, and cabarets listed in the tax records, seventeen—just over half—rented the apartments above their businesses.⁸⁸ Rather than living in these apartments themselves, they frequently used them to house workers who worked late shifts or to sublet to other individuals to earn extra income. Sometimes they were left vacant and used for storage. Although there is no concrete evidence to prove that shopkeepers made these decisions in the 1960s in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, these were common practices for shopkeepers in Paris and other cities around the world for centuries. Nonetheless, some of these shopkeepers—precisely how many one cannot determine—would have lived above their businesses.

Three of the six hotel owners in the Faubourg Saint-Denis also paid a rental tax at their hotels, indicating that they also lived at the same address. As previously mentioned, these hotels

⁸⁷ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 877.

⁸⁸ *Cabaret* was a term used in the *taxe patente* records to denote *debts de boissons*, or drinking establishments that had liquor licenses. See, for example, “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 2 rue d’Enghien & 63 rue du Château-d’Eau.

frequently operated as monthly rentals for recently arrived residents and were more rudimentary than hotels in the more touristic areas of the city—they were referred to in the tax records as *hôtels garni au confort moyen*—“of average comfort.” Hotel owners, therefore, performed most of the operational work themselves, and did not have to hire many employees. Two hotels each employed two salaried workers, two employed one salaried worker, and two had no employees. Mr. R.P., who ran Le Home Échiquier at 5 rue de l’Echiquier, hired no one and lived in the building.⁸⁹ The two women hotel owners—both widows—also lived in their hotels which were just down the street from each other on the rue du Château-d’Eau: the “Hôtel de l’Union et des Postes” had one employee and the “Central-Hôtel” two.⁹⁰ These hotels most likely also hired part-time cleaners and janitors that were not officially recorded in the books. While it is likely that the owners of the two hotels with no employees would have to have been deeply involved in the business, a manager to run daily operations could have been one of the employees hired by the two widows.

Cafés, restaurants, and bars, often considered the most important sites of social mixing and community in cities, were found throughout the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁹¹ The block of the rue d’Enghien between the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue d’Hauteville, for example, had five restaurants—at numbers 15, 19, 25, 27, and 31—five bars—at numbers 2, 10, 11, 21, and 23 and this was a side street, adjacent to the main commercial area on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁹² While the rue de l’Echiquier, another side street, had only two restaurants at numbers 12 and 13, it also had five bars at numbers 4, 7, 15, 18, and 28.⁹³ The short rue de la Fidélité had three cafés—Le Petit Beaujoulais (number 3), Le Petit Quinquin (number 5), and Normandy-Bar (number 9 bis)—and one bar, also at number 5, that was registered as both a *bar de dégustation*, or a tasting bar for beer or wine, and a massage parlor.⁹⁴ These establishments most likely received some business from the movie theater at number 9, Le Fidélio, which offered between seven and fifteen screenings per day, specializing in Arabic-language movies with subtitles.⁹⁵

Cafés, bars, and restaurants packed the entire five-block length of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis itself. From the grand, early twentieth-century Art Nouveau elegance of Restaurant Julien at number 16 to the Grisbi-Bar at number 105 that sold coffee and wine to be consumed

⁸⁹ Ibid., 5 rue de l’Echiquier. *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 367.*

⁹⁰ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 65 & 66 rue du Château-d’Eau; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 266.*

⁹¹ For an in-depth examination of the role of cafés and bars in the creation of communities and neighborhoods, see the 2010 study of Belleville: Anne Steiner and Sylvaine Conord, *Belleville cafés* (Paris: Editions l’échappée, 2010).

⁹² While the tax records distinguished among cafés, restaurants, and bars, it is very difficult to know how an establishment listed as a restaurant differed from a café, as owners had lots of leeway on how to operate their businesses. Some cafés sold food and resembled restaurants, while others did not and resembled bars. “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 2, 10, 11, 15, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27 & 31 rue d’Enghien.

⁹³ Ibid., 4, 7, 12, 13, 15, 18 & 28 rue de l’Echiquier.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 3, 5, 9, & 9 bis rue de la Fidélité; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 399.*

⁹⁵ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 9 rue de la Fidélité; *Mémoire des rues : Paris 10e arrondissement, 1900-1940.* (Paris: Parimagine, 2007), 79.

on premises and charcoal to fuel one's home heating system, users of the street had a wide range of options as to where they could consume their food and drink.⁹⁶ Every block of the street had a selection of establishments, so there was always somewhere to eat within one hundred feet. Three of the cafés—Le Lutétia at number 37, Le Tabac des Petites-Ecuries at number 63, and Magne at number 83—were also licensed as *tabacs*, or places to sell tobacco products.⁹⁷ These cafés, as well as the rest, were surely places to escape the street—especially during the winter—and smoke a cigarette (or ten) with a cup of espresso or a glass of wine in hand. Although one could sit at a table in all of these establishments, much of the life within them (and most of the transactions, especially at the smaller ones) was found at their bars. There, customers would stand up, read the newspaper, chat, and, most importantly, pay half the drink prices charged to table-sitting customers.

Other storefronts were occupied by a handful of businesses typical to urban or suburban neighborhoods. There were six electricians, five laundry shops—called *blanchisseries*—where one could drop off clothes to be washed and pressed (automatic laundromats and dry cleaners had not yet arrived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, except one for industrial use only), fifteen hair salons (four for women, two for men, two unisex, and seven unknown), three perfume shops, four toy stores, and six pharmacies.⁹⁸ Like the old-fashioned technology of the laundry shops, a few other stores sold products from an earlier time, including two sellers of coal and wood to heat the many apartments and businesses in the neighborhood that lacked electric or gas heating.⁹⁹ Some cafés, such as Orliac at 3 cour des Petites-Ecuries, also sold coal and wood on the side.¹⁰⁰ Other stores sold more up-to-date technology. Just off the corner from the Château d'Eau metro station was a photography equipment shop, Strasbourg Photo.¹⁰¹ A radio receiver and stereo equipment store, Studio Saint-Denis, lay along the Grands Boulevards, a busier area that likely attracted a greater number of customers.¹⁰² The records also list three large car garages, two on the rue d'Enghien and one on the Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle, which gave drivers a place to park their cars in a part of Paris that had not been built to accommodate them.¹⁰³ The Faubourg Saint-Denis contained a wide variety of stores and establishments that offered users a variety of options for any type of good or service they would have liked to purchase for everyday living.

The *taxe patente* and Bottin records in 1960 suggest that in terms of retail, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was primarily a marketplace for food, both for consumption on the premises and to

⁹⁶ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 877.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 875–877.

⁹⁸ “AdP 2477W 11,12”; Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875–877.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 28 rue de l’Echiquier. The others was located at 87 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876.

¹⁰⁰ See Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 751. Another was located at 105 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Ibid., 877.

¹⁰¹ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 55 rue du Château-d’Eau.

¹⁰² Ibid., 10 bis Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle; Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 191.

¹⁰³ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 9 & 21 rue d’Enghien; 24 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

take away. Together, they listed 33 grocery stores (*épiceries*) and produce shops (*primeurs*) and 57 cafés, bars, and restaurants, evenly dispersed throughout the neighborhood.¹⁰⁴ The neighborhood also had fourteen bakeries and pastry shops (*boulangeries* and *pâtisseries*), six wine and spirits shops, fifteen butchers (*boucheries*), five pork butchers (*charcuteries*), four poultry butchers (*volailleurs*), four fishmongers (*poissonneries*), four tripe vendors (*triperies*), eight cheese and milk shops (*crèmeries*), and four sweet shops.¹⁰⁵ According to Louis Chevalier, “Les Halles themselves were represented [in the Faubourg Saint-Denis] by one of the most beautiful markets in Paris and by the loveliest food shops in all the city.”¹⁰⁶

Along the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis food shops lay directly next to each other to allow for easy access by customers. One such “mini-market” was found at 50, 52, and 54 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. A *volailleur*, Vavasseur, a *poissonnier*, Marcilly, and a produce shop, Aux Quatre Saisons, operated out of 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Next door at number 52 was an *épicerie*, Delouvre, followed by Royal-Cabello, a *pâtisserie*, at number 54. This was not a place where supermarkets had come to dominate the retail food market.

Mme N.T. noted that her mother, who lived on the other side of the Porte Saint-Denis in the 2nd arrondissement in the 1950s and 1960s, never walked any farther north than the rue de l’Echiquier on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis because she could do all of her shopping—for fruit, vegetables, chicken, milk, meat, and fish—at the shops on that one block of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁰⁷ There, near the Porte Saint-Denis, lay a *pâtisserie* (Binet at 9), a bakery (Peyrard at 15), two butchers (Capeaumont at 12 and the Boucherie Nouvelle at 24), a poultry butcher (Giraud at 14), a fishmonger (La Poissonnerie de la Porte Saint-Denis at 20), two tripe shops (Chédeau at 14 and Valle at 19), a milk and cheese shop (Bouillot at 11), and two grocery stores selling produce (Battesti at 10 and the Société Française d’Exploitation Agricole at 23).¹⁰⁸ People who came to this neighborhood to shop were not lacking options. But Mme N.T. also mentioned the importance of shopping at the *quatre saisons* (“four seasons”), the itinerant sellers who sold produce and other food items out of carts on the street.¹⁰⁹ They were not temporary vendors, like those who came to a once-a-week market. They would have been open for business every day the storefronts were open. They were important enough for an *épicerie* with a real storefront at 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis to be named Aux Quatre Saisons in their honor.

¹⁰⁴ Even though the main commercial road—the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis—was not included, the tax registry listed sixteen grocery stores and produce shops, 21 restaurants and cafés, and twelve bars. The Bottin records for the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis added another 24 restaurants, cafés, and bars, as well as seventeen grocery stores and produce vendors. In the upcoming pages, the statistics come from combining all the tax registry information with the less precise Bottin listings for the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. “AdP 2477W 11,12”; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875–877.

¹⁰⁵ “AdP 2477W 11,12”; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875–877.

¹⁰⁶ Louis Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne : 1940-1960* (Paris: Fayard, 1982), 232.

¹⁰⁷ N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012.”

¹⁰⁸ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875.

¹⁰⁹ Mme N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., November 27, 2009,” In person, November 27, 2009.

Not only was the *quatre saisons*' produce cheaper than that found at sellers with storefronts—they often sold older, riper produce at discounts—but they had a chaotic, loud, and enjoyable culture of buying, similar to a typical outdoor food market in Paris. In 1909, a postcard (Figure 2) captured the *quatre saisons* selling all types of produce on the east side of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. The photo looks south toward the Porte Saint-Denis, between the rue du Château d'Eau—behind the photographer—and the cour des Petites-Ecuries, whose entrance would be at the second building on the right. Nearly the entire eastern side of the street was filled with these vendors, creating a shopping-mall feel along the sidewalks—similar to the interior of the Passage du Prado with its clothing sellers—with the *quatre saisons* on one side and storefronts on the other. In order to walk quickly down the street, one would have had to use the west side of the street or walk down the middle, sidestepping carriages, like the man wearing a light-colored hat in Figure 2. As the postcard said in its caption, this was “the market.”

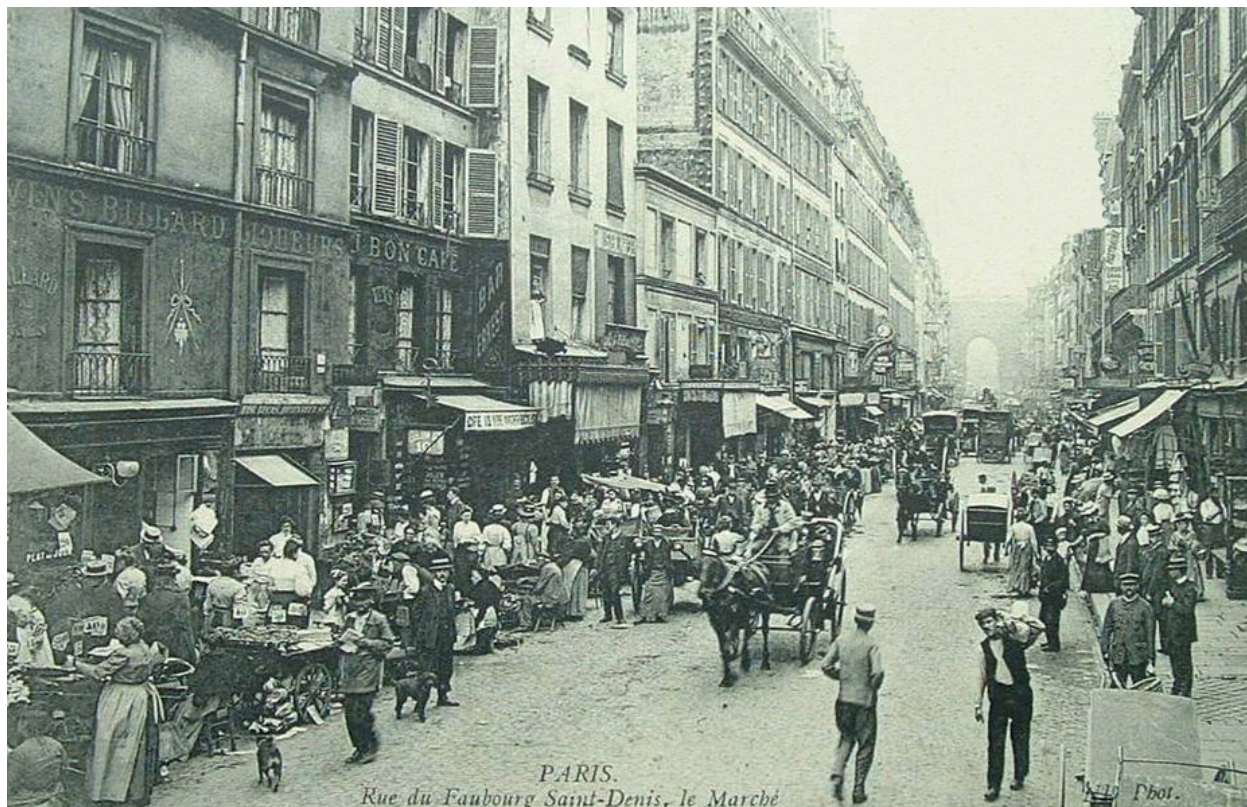


Figure 2. A 1909 postcard representing the *quatre-saisons* of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Author's collection.

For N.T., it was this marketplace and its *quatre saisons* for which she was most nostalgic when asked to look back at her time living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the late 1950s and 1960s.¹¹⁰ Times were harder for her family and her mother back then, so shopping at the *quatre saisons* helped them spend less money on their weekly provisions. Shopping for food on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis from the late-nineteenth century up until the late 1960s involved

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

looking inside shops and outside on the street for food, picking the best products for the best prices. It was in fact this market, according to N.T., that attracted so many people to come and shop on the street.

Traces of these street sellers are hard to come by in official documentation. None are listed in the Bottin commercial listings. When looking at the *taxe patente* records in 1960, only eight vendors—six of whom were married women—are shown selling from a street stall (*en étalage*), when there were assuredly many more on the streets.¹¹¹ As the records for the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis are missing it is impossible to know if all the sellers on the street on any given day would have shown up in the tax records, as they may have been stationed there illegally without a permit. Seven of the eight vendors listed in the tax registries, though, took part in the Faubourg Saint-Denis market. They were situated on the corners of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis but listed at addresses on the intersecting street. These records suggest that the Faubourg Saint-Denis was a different type of public space than other streets in the neighborhood, because only it was filled with vendors every day—none were mentioned in the tax registers except at points where streets intersected with the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. It was the central commercial street of the surrounding area, filled with “the splendor of its street stalls.”¹¹²

These street sellers, as well as the merchants with storefronts, most likely bought their produce at wholesale prices down the road at Les Halles or at some of the wholesale produce sellers who operated in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. These wholesale vendors in the neighborhood, such as “Mon Verger,” located in the courtyard of 62 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, operated as middlemen.¹¹³ They probably bought their produce at Les Halles in very large quantities and then sold it in smaller, yet still wholesale, quantities to the vendors of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

One vendor, Mme S.D., who ran a fruit and vegetable shop at 67 rue du Château-d’Eau, just off the corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, also had a permit to sell oysters *en étalage* in front of the Arragon *crèmerie* at 64 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹¹⁴ This would have been the same spot where the woman at the bottom left corner of the postcard (Figure 2), wearing a dress with an apron with her back to the camera, was standing. On the northeast corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue du Château-d’Eau in front of the Paul Prunière café, lay the *quatre saisons* merchant Mr. A.B., who sold fruits and vegetables.¹¹⁵ Another seller, Mme J.B., sold fresh fruit in front of Chez Jeannette, a café at the corner of the rue d’Enghien and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹¹⁶ A similar fruit and vegetable seller operated farther north on the street in front of the entrance to the Passage du Désir at 84 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ “AdP 2477W 11,12.”

¹¹² Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 233.

¹¹³ “Mon Verger” sold all types of produce. Others, such as Dollé, a wholesale vendor based in the same building, sold only potatoes at one location (no. 62) and fruits at another (no. 64). *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876.

¹¹⁴ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 67 rue du Château-d’Eau. *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876.

¹¹⁵ *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876; “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 78 rue du Château d’Eau.

¹¹⁶ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 2 rue d’Enghien; *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876.

¹¹⁷ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 33 passage du Désir.



Figure 3. The *quatre saisons* in front of 61 bis rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in *Une femme est une femme*.

The importance of the *quatre saisons* on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960, though missing from the archival sources, can be confirmed by a few short shots in Godard's *Une femme est une femme*. Godard captured several vendors as his camera watched Anna Karina walk down the street—Figure 3 depicts her in the center of the image wearing a white coat, looking into the newspaper store. In Figure 3 alone, we see four *quatre saisons* in front of 61 bis rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, this time on the opposite side of the street than in the postcard from 1909 (Figure 2). Just as in the postcard, the presence of the *quatre saisons* creates the feeling of a bazaar for the pedestrians walking on the sidewalk. In this still image, it is clear that the *quatre saisons* were dispersed along the street, not confined to locations in front of the small strips of food shops in the area. The vendors, one of whom who seems to be selling oranges or carrots, were stationed in front of Aux Tisserands (the blue hosiery shop on the right), a newspaper and magazine store, Vini-Prix (wine shop), and Aux Soldes Réunis (a discount clothing store).¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 876.



Figure 4. An older man selling herbs, garlic, and shallots on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in *Une femme est une femme*.



Figure 5. An older woman selling carrots on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in front of #42 and the entrance to the Passage de l'Industrie in *Une femme est une femme*.

Godard, in a series of shots of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the surrounding area, also filmed close-ups of the *quatre saisons* vendors at work. In Figure 4, an older man stood in front of his vegetable cart selling herbs and staples. The small black board behind him listed the available produce: parsley, thyme, bay leaves, garlic, chives, shallots, and chervil, which seems to be the special offer of the day as it is listed separately at the bottom. Only some of the prices are visible. Parsley was selling at 40 francs per bunch, and thyme and chervil for 50 francs per

bunch.¹¹⁹ In Figure 5, the elderly woman selling carrots and only carrots out of her cart was offering them for 40 francs per kilo.¹²⁰

According to *taxe patente* records, three other vendors operated on the street directly in front of the Porte Saint-Denis. Here, at the beginning of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, where it intersected with the Grands Boulevards, was a different type of space for different customers. The three vendors here—all women—did not sell produce, but rather lingerie, flowers, and crêpes and ice cream.¹²¹ In Figure 6, in another frame from *Une femme est une femme*, is a permanent structure devoted to lingerie sales to the right of the metro entrance, in front of the green entrance to 8 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle. At the right of the image, in front of the yellow café awning is a slightly different type of street vending equipment, a white and yellow stand that, if the tax records are correct, would have been a crêpe and ice cream vendor. The third vendor listed is not visible in front of the shoe store with the blue awning. Neither of these



Figure 6. Film still from *Une femme est une femme*, looking out onto Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, numbers 2 (right) to 8 (left).

¹¹⁹ In 1960, 50 older francs would have been equivalent to approximately 10 cents in the United States. Michel-Pierre Chélini, “Le plan de stabilisation Pinay-Rueff, 1958,” *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine* 48, no. 4 (October 2001): 110.

¹²⁰ These were cheap prices in Paris for these vegetables. In 1958, for example, in a television broadcast devoted to the falling price of meat in Paris, they interview Jean Quittard, the owner and head butcher at Bardet, on the corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rue de Metz. The prices visible in his shop suggest that meat was much more expensive than these vegetables. A kilo of *bifsteck* and *rosbif* cost 795 old francs and their *rosbif extra* cost 895 old francs (or 7.95 and 8.95 NF, respectively), twenty times the cost of a kilo of carrots. Most Parisians in this neighborhood had little choice but to subsist on vegetables in 1960 in Paris. Mme N.T.’s mother, for most of the 1950s never bought meat and only infrequently purchased smoked fish, her favorite food. “Problème sur le prix de la viande à Paris,” *Journal télévisé nuit* (RTF, October 21, 1958), Institut national de l’audiovisuel; N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T.,” September 6, 2012.”

¹²¹ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 2, 6 & 8 Bd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

two semi-permanent, street vending structures resembled the produce sellers of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.

While some of these vendors might have lived in the neighborhood, no traces of their local residences appear in any of the archives. As for ties to other parts of Paris, the crêpe and ice cream seller at the Porte Saint-Denis worked for a company based in Malakoff, a suburb to the south of Paris, and the fruit and vegetable seller outside the Passage du Désir lived at 13 rue des Martyrs in the 9th arrondissement, a twenty-minute walk from her stall. It seems as if vendors commuted to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to profit from the number of customers who came to shop on the street.

Just as there is little or no documentation about the street vendors of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, there is also no information available about the managers of the more permanent commercial establishments in the neighborhood. But although there are almost no records of non-owners who ran these shops, whether they were cafés, butchers, or stereo shops, certain traces left behind suggest that, like the majority of people searching for jobs in the neighborhood, most were quotidiens who lived outside the Faubourg Saint-Denis. This is especially important because it is these quotidiens who interacted in its public space every day, who knew the users of the neighborhood, and who were at the center of its daily life. Their presence in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, as important as it may have been, would otherwise have been lost if not for infrequent marginalia in the neighborhood's tax records.

The *taxe patente* registers are again the window onto these managers, both of storefront businesses and those lying inside buildings. In the infrequent event that a business had not correctly paid its taxes or had moved its office, a tax agent would first search for the manager, or *gérant*, of the business in order to settle the accounts. In these instances, the agent would write the name and home address of the manager in the margins of the business's registry entry. This small sample can help create a picture of the geographical diversity of some of the most important actors in the daily life of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. It is unlikely these businesses were attempting to commit fraud; many had simply changed address. Most paid past dues as soon as the tax authorities contacted them, especially those that had storefronts; it would have been difficult for them to vacate their premises unannounced and flee the city or country. Even if all of these businesses had consciously attempted to evade taxes, it is unclear that they, as a group, would be more likely to have managers living outside of the neighborhood.

Of the nine managers of businesses and organizations without storefronts, none lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, in its surrounding areas, in the 10th arrondissement, or even in any of the six arrondissements that border it. These managers did not prioritize proximity when they chose their homes or their workplaces. This contradicts the general assumption urban scholars have that people prefer to work close to home. As seen in the discussion of rental prices in Chapter 1, these managers could have found apartments to rent near the Faubourg Saint-Denis for similar prices to the places where they live.

Despite the distances between their homes and work, most managers lived in places where they would have had convenient commutes. While they may have lived far away and would have had to budget between 30 minutes and an hour of transit time in each direction to work, they tended to live close to a bus or train line that would bring them directly, without transfers, to the Faubourg Saint-Denis. This suggests that people with regular, secure work in the Faubourg Saint-Denis may have prioritized commute convenience rather than close proximity to their work.

For the purposes of this study one has to assume that the majority of people did not commute to work by car.¹²² Some, like Mr. J.G., who worked at Mr. L.K.'s father's fur workshop, may have chosen to drive to work, even though they lived close by.¹²³ Parking was easier back in the 1960s, J.G. said. He was able to leave his car parked all day on the Boulevard de Strasbourg. Assuming that traffic was not bad, a car would have made many of their commutes shorter.

Seven of the nine managers lived in Paris proper, though not in nearby areas. The closest would have been Mr. M.M., the president of the Association des Italiens de France (The French-Italian Association). His office was at 13 rue d'Enghien—a building whose owner forced all businesses to vacate in 1960—and he lived just seven stops away on the metro, a fifteen-minute trip, near Saint-Michel on line 4 at 5 rue Dante in the 5th arrondissement.¹²⁴ The unnamed president of the La Croisade association based at 13 rue d'Enghien also had an easy commute. While he lived reasonably far away in one of the fanciest parts of Paris at 27 rue Saint-Didier in the 16th arrondissement near the Place du Trocadéro and its views of the Eiffel Tower, his commute would have taken less than half-an-hour on the metro, taking line 9 direct from Trocadéro to Strasbourg Saint-Denis.¹²⁵

The trip would have only been a few minutes longer for Mr. J.D., an agent for actors in theater who had his office at 22 rue de l'Echiquier and who lived at 2 rue Octave Feuillet in a different, wealthy part of the 16th arrondissement near the headquarters of the OECD, one of the two major international organizations located in Paris.¹²⁶ His apartment was only a few blocks away from the La Muette metro station, so he would have had a direct trip on line 9 to the Strasbourg Saint-Denis station or on bus line 32 to the Hauteville stop, each of which would have taken a bit more than half-an-hour door-to-door.¹²⁷ Mme G.C., who ran Sylvie Laura SARL, a

¹²² For a thorough discussion of cars in Paris during this period, especially concerning their regulation, see Chapter 4, Section 2, “Le temps de l’urbanisme automobile (1950-1968)” in Mathieu Flonneau, *Paris et l’automobile: un siècle de passions* (Hachette Littératures, 2005), 150–186.

¹²³ J.G. lived on the rue du Temple in the 3rd arrondissement, a fifteen-minute walk from his job. J.G., “Interview with Mr. J.G., September 13, 2012.”

¹²⁴ “AdP 2477W 11,12”, 13 rue d’Enghien.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 13 rue d’Enghien.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 22 rue de l’Echiquier.

¹²⁷ For bus routes, see Raymond Denaès, *Guide général de Paris. Répertoire des rues avec indication de la plus proche station du Métro*. (Paris: Editions l’Indispensable, 1971), 166.

clothing manufacturing company at 18 rue d'Enghien, commuted from even farther away.¹²⁸ She lived in the far southwest of the city in the 15th arrondissement at 176 rue Lecourbe. Even though she lived such a great distance from the Faubourg Saint-Denis, she had a direct trip to Strasbourg Saint-Denis on line 8 of the metro from Félix Faure, the station closest to her apartment. Her commute would have taken only 30 to 40 minutes.

Mr. M.B., the president of the Centre d'Etudes Régionales, based at 13 rue d'Enghien, lived near the Gare de Lyon in the 12th arrondissement, but would have also had a reasonably short commute of twenty minutes by taking the metro line 8 to Strasbourg Saint-Denis from the Reuilly-Diderot station.¹²⁹ The same was true for Mr. M.B., the manager of a photography business, Omniphot, at 13 rue d'Enghien, who lived at 117 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs in the 6th arrondissement near the southern tip of the Luxembourg Gardens.¹³⁰ From there, he would have had a twenty to 40 minute commute on one of several bus lines or line 4 of the metro to Château-d'Eau or Strasbourg Saint-Denis from the Vavin station. Although Mr. R.L., the manager of Paremain SARL (of unknown industry) at 18 rue d'Enghien, lived much closer to his work, he would have had a longer commute.¹³¹ He lived at 153 rue Legendre in the 17th, near the Brochant metro station, which did not have direct metro to the Faubourg Saint-Denis. He could have taken the 54 bus from the Legendre stop, just outside his apartment, to the Gare de l'Est and walked south on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis to work.¹³² This would have taken upwards of 45 minutes in morning traffic.

The last two managers lived very far away in the suburbs of Paris. Mme A.V. who ran the Bureau d'Arts Graphiques, a graphic design and advertising firm at 18 rue d'Enghien, lived in a single-family home at 44 rue des Mimosas in Antony, a quiet suburb just over five miles south of Paris.¹³³ She would have had a commute of almost an hour if she took public transport, though she would only have one train to change. The "Ligne de Sceaux," a suburban train line, would have brought her from the downtown Antony station (about two-thirds of a mile from her home) to the Denfert-Rochereau station in the 14th arrondissement in Paris, from where she would have changed to line 4, straight to the Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹³⁴ Otherwise, she could have taken a much longer bus to Paris or she could have taken a car. Whichever choice she made, she had a considerable trip every morning.

Mr. M.B. also had to take a long trip to the Faubourg Saint-Denis from his house in the countryside at 95 rue de Paris in Tournan-en-Brie, about twenty miles southeast of Paris.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 18/16 rue d'Enghien.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 13 rue d'Enghien.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 13 rue d'Enghien.

¹³¹ Ibid., 18/16 rue d'Enghien.

¹³² Denaès, *Guide général de Paris.*, 172.

¹³³ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 18/16 rue d'Enghien.

¹³⁴ André Leconte, ed., *Guide de la Banlieue de Paris. Indicateur des rues de 180 communes de Seine, Seine-et-Oise et Seine-et-Marne.*, 12th ed. (Paris: André Leconte, 1960), 6–7.

¹³⁵ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 3 rue de la Fidélité.

Although he most likely commuted to Paris every day, he did not exclusively work in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. He managed a tapestry repair business that had a branch at 3 rue de la Fidélité in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but its central office was just south of République at 48 rue Saint-Sabin in the 11th arrondissement. Even though his trip would have probably taken an hour by a train that ran at irregular intervals, it would have brought him directly to the Gare de l'Est from the Gretz-Amainvilliers station, which was less than a mile away from his home. While Mr. M.B. chose to live far away from his work in Paris, his house was conveniently located for easy access to the 10th and 11th arrondissements once his train arrived in the city.

Six examples of businesses with storefronts in the Faubourg Saint-Denis who had non-owner managers exist in the *taxe patente* registries. While none of the managers lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis proper, three lived close by while three lived farther away. For certain managers of storefronts, some of which had long, irregular hours, close proximity may have been an important consideration in where they chose to live.

We have the address of the operator for only one café in the Faubourg Saint-Denis who did not live in the same building as their establishment. Mr. and Mme B. ran a café on the corner of the Passage du Désir and the Boulevard de Strasbourg and they lived at 51 rue des Vinaigriers in the 10th arrondissement, only a three minute walk away.¹³⁶ As they ran a family business which demanded long hours, living close to their place of work was an advantage to them.

Mr. L.G., who ran a wine and spirits shop at 28 Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle, also lived nearby the shop in which he worked.¹³⁷ His apartment, at 30 bis rue Bergère in the 9th arrondissement, was only five minutes away on foot. In 1959, Mr. G.V., who managed an auto-repair shop at 24 Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle had been living at 5 rue Vassoux in Romainville, a suburb just to the northeast of Paris.¹³⁸ Although his home was less than a mile from the edge of the city, it was inconveniently located to reach his work. He would have had to take a bus to the Porte-des-Lilas, then the metro line 11 to République, and either walk from there to his work, which would have taken another ten to fifteen minutes, or switch to metro line 8 or 9 to Bonne-Nouvelle. All in all, this commute could have taken an hour. In 1960, however, Mr. G.V. had moved to an apartment at 155 rue Montmartre in the 2nd arrondissement, less than five minutes away from his garage on foot.

Although Mme R.M. was the owner and manager of a stationery shop that bore her family name at 17 rue d'Enghien, she chose to live far away from her store.¹³⁹ Her apartment, at 80 rue Robert Lindet in the 15th arrondissement, was almost on the opposite end of Paris, at its southeastern corner. For her to commute, it would have taken either one metro change from the line 12 to the line 4 at Montparnasse—a 40-minute trip—or taking the 39 bus from near her

¹³⁶ Ibid., 33 Passage du Désir.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 28 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 24 Blvd de Bonne-Nouvelle.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 17 rue d'Enghien.

apartment directly to Strasbourg Saint-Denis or Château d'Eau.¹⁴⁰ This could have taken even longer, but the route was simple and direct. The unnamed manager of Central Pressing, a laundry and ironing shop at 3 rue de l'Echiquier, found him or herself in a similar situation.¹⁴¹ The manager lived at 50 avenue des Gobelins in the 13th arrondissement, near the Place d'Italie. There were a number of transport options—line 5 direct to Gare de l'Est or line 7 to line 4 or bus 47 direct from Place d'Italie to Strasbourg Saint-Denis—all of which would have taken between twenty and forty minutes.¹⁴²

Mme O., the manager of L'Etof, a shop that sold fabric for upholstery at 87 passage Brady, made the commute from her home at 13 rue Bartholdi in Boulogne-sur-Seine, a suburb just to the southwest of Paris.¹⁴³ Despite living far from the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the Boulogne Jean-Jaures stop on metro line 10 was a block away from her apartment. It would have allowed her an easy one-stop transfer to the line 9, which would have taken her directly to Strasbourg Saint-Denis. Her commute would have been under forty-five minutes. She also performed other tasks for her business in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, including the banking, according to the tax records, at Crédit Lyonnais at 6 Boulevard Saint-Denis, just outside of the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station.¹⁴⁴

It is not surprising that the majority of these managers would have lived in conveniently located places with direct access on some form of public transport to the Faubourg Saint-Denis. They managed businesses (and potentially owned them as well, as this is not said in the tax records) and therefore enjoyed a certain amount of job security. They were most likely not newcomers to their jobs as managerial positions in small shops in France were often held for the long-term. This security gave them the luxury to choose a place to live that they liked that was also economically and geographically convenient. People who worked in the Faubourg Saint-Denis but had started their jobs more recently or who did not have the job security of a manager, did not have the same option to live somewhere with easy access to the neighborhood.¹⁴⁵

One event in particular, in which a manager of a business complained about an employee, reveals, again, the extent to which not only a manager, but an entire business in the Faubourg

¹⁴⁰ Denaès, *Guide général de Paris.*, 167.

¹⁴¹ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 3 rue de l'Echiquier.

¹⁴² Denaès, *Guide général de Paris.*, 169.

¹⁴³ "AdP 2477W 11,12", 87/93 Passage Brady.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 87/93 Passage Brady.

¹⁴⁵ Workers had been commuting to the city center of Paris from its edges and beyond since the nineteenth century. In *The Rise of the Paris Red Belt*, Tyler Stovall suggests that the important move of the working class population to the Paris suburbs in the first three decades of the twentieth century had a great effect on the city. With workers—mainly men—living farther away from both the city and the workplace, they spent less time near their homes. In his study of Bobigny, which was then a small suburb to the northeast of Paris, Stovall shows how the population of manual laborers grew from twenty in 1896 to 557 in 1931, to make up 69 percent of the employed population (originally 21 percent).¹⁴⁵ As there was little industry in the town, most workers commuted, some walking thirty minutes to find a train into Paris. Tyler Stovall, *The Rise of the Paris Red Belt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 75–82.

Saint-Denis relied on non-residents. On April 13, 1960, Mme Lucie Rigault, the manager of a printing company, Établissements Allard, based at 80 rue René Boulanger, just east of the Porte Saint-Martin, accused one of her employees, Roger Urbain, of attempting to destroy the company's manufacturing equipment.¹⁴⁶ In her filing, she brought with her two witnesses who had been inside the company's facilities that day: Roger Heqveux, one of her printers, and Charles Combe, the CEO of a different company, Technique Mécanique, who had happened to be on the premises that day. None of these four people lived near the neighborhood and only came there for work. Mme Rigault, the manager, lived in a beautiful, single-family home at 9 rue de la Pacaterie in Orsay, about twelve miles south of Paris. Mr. Urbain, whom she accused of tampering with equipment, lived at 44 rue de Bonday in the working-class suburb of Aulnay-sous-Bois, in an older building destroyed during renovations to the city in the 1970s. The second employee, Mr. Heqveux, lived in an apartment building at 16 place Adolphe Chérioux near the Vaugirard metro station in the 15th arrondissement. Combe's company was based in the northeast suburb of La Courneuve.

Living in or close to the Faubourg Saint-Denis was not a priority for most managers of businesses. While a small percentage were wealthier and therefore chose to live in neighborhoods fancier than the Faubourg Saint-Denis, most lived in parts of Paris and its suburbs that were not drastically cheaper or more expensive. This suggests that for the people who made a good salary—managers, not part-time employees—and therefore had the means to choose where they lived, most made decisions to live at a significant distance from their place of work. It is possible that they did not see the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a desirable neighborhood. On the other hand, it is also possible that a straightforward commute was not inconvenient for them and they did not have an innate preference to live close to the area where they spent their days. Geographic separation of work and home may have actually been desirable for the majority of managers.

We now have concrete evidence that most of the users of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960, whether they were job-seekers, workers, or managers, were quolidians, not residents. Although one can suggest possible commuting routes for these individuals living outside the neighborhood, very few concrete records about commuting patterns are available from 1960. The RATP (*Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens*), the authority presiding over the metro and bus systems in Paris, had not yet begun to do advanced statistical studies to measure the usage of their system. The statistics they collected reveal only the smallest beginnings of the story of commuting in Paris in 1960.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ "Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1960", entry #698, April 13, 1960.

¹⁴⁷ The city opened its metro system sixty years earlier, relatively late among European cities, just in time for the 1900 Exposition Universelle and Olympics, both held in Paris that year. The system has continued to expand since its inception as the number of passengers it services every year rises. After the introduction of the RER, the regional rail network, in 1969, the RATP was able to serve the regional suburban population, which continues to grow in numbers every year. See Michel Margairaz, *Histoire de la RATP: la singulière aventure des transports parisiens* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1989); Noëlle Gérôme and Michel Margairaz, eds., *Métro, dépôts, réseaux: Territoires et*

What is clear from these primitive statistics, which measured only the number of people entering stations, not exiting them, is that many passengers in the metro were using the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station.¹⁴⁸ Lines 9 and 4, both of which stopped there, attracted the second and third highest volume of ridership out of the thirteen lines on the system. In terms of number of entries, Strasbourg Saint-Denis was ranked number thirteen out of 261 total stations in the system, with an estimated twelve million entries during the calendar year. Even though line 9 was so widely used, not many people got on its trains at Strasbourg Saint-Denis; of the station's twelve million entries, only two million were on line 9, while five million got on lines 4 and 8. Entry statistics, however, only reveal part of the picture, since it is possible that the majority of metro users exiting at Strasbourg Saint-Denis had been traveling on line 9.

The Château d'Eau metro stop, which ranked only 145 among stations, as it only had one line running through it, had 2.6 million entrants in 1960. If we trust these statistics, over 7,000 people walked down the steps of the metro entrance every day of the year. Although we do not know who these people were, we know that they must have been using the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis and its surrounding areas, even if only for a short walk, before they left it. The same was true for the entrants to the Strasbourg Saint-Denis station, as the statistics do not include transfers within the station. Each and every one of those twelve million passengers—almost 33,000 per day—had to have been on the streets of the neighborhood before entering the station and commuting far away. One could probably assume that there would be similar numbers of exits, with a certain number of overlaps. Overall, one can safely estimate that at least 50,000 unique individuals walked in and out of the metro stations in the Faubourg Saint-Denis every day.

The metro and the streets around its entrances were busy. If we estimate that 80,000 people walked up or down the stairs at Strasbourg Saint-Denis and Château d'Eau (including the same person multiple times if he entered and exited) and we factor in that the metro was open for service nineteen hours of the day, we arrive at over 4,200 people moving in and out of the metro per hour, or over 70 people per minute.

The number of people using the streets in this part of Paris was even greater than these statistics show. One must also factor in that a significant number of people visiting the Faubourg Saint-Denis walked to the neighborhood after having arrived at any of three major metro and train stations nearby, the Gare du Nord (ranked #2 for the whole city), République (ranked #4), and the Gare de l'Est (ranked #5). Like so much of the rest of Paris, this part of the city, came to life thanks to the daily mobility of its users.

personnels des transports parisiens au XXe siècle. Actes des journées d'étude, Aubervilliers, 21-22 novembre 1998. (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2002).

¹⁴⁸ For all the statistics in this section, see "Regie Autonome des Transports Parisiens, Direction du Réseau Ferré, Service Central de l'Exploitation. Année 1960, Nombre de Voyageurs Entrants.", 1960.

Beyond work, many people came to the Faubourg Saint-Denis for leisurely interests. Somewhat by accident, the Faubourg Saint-Denis had become the center of the boxing scene in Paris. Jean Bretonnel, the most important boxing manager and trainer in France from the 1920s until the 1960s, had his gym at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁴⁹ He also trained boxers a block away at the best-known boxing gym in Paris, Le Central, located at 57 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis until it closed its doors in 1968. These two gyms brought in boxers, including many French champions, from all over the Paris region to train, and were the sites where many young boxers learned to become greats.¹⁵⁰ The gyms were magnets, serving a group of boxers who came to train in the Faubourg Saint-Denis because, like for the fur or printing industry, the center of their trade was located there. These gyms were “the Eldorado for those who sought their fortunes with their fists.”¹⁵¹ Although he did not have documentation to prove it, Louis Chevalier believed that the two boxing gyms were so important and influential that “many people lived [in the Faubourg Saint-Denis] who were, who aspired, or who hoped one day to be boxers, or who had been a long time ago.”¹⁵²

The majority of leisure visitors to the area came to the wide, traffic-filled boulevards that surround the Faubourg Saint-Denis on three sides—the Boulevards Saint-Denis, Bonne-Nouvelle, Strasbourg, and Magenta. These outsiders came to the neighborhood, especially at night, where movie theaters, clubs, and large restaurants filled the buildings’ large, commercial spaces. As Louis Chevalier wrote about newcomers to Paris from the rest of France during the 1950s:

At the deepest of motivations for immigration to Paris...[was] the attraction to the night: more than economic circumstances, more than familial reasons, more than career paths, the principal role was the desire to escape that which Balzac called “the coldness of the provincial environment” and to know finally that which one still calls the “ville-lumière,” the dazzling of the night.¹⁵³

The nighttime attractions of the Faubourg Saint-Denis and its surrounding area were what made it live and thrive, and what brought the majority of Parisians in contact with the neighborhood. Speaking of Paris in the 1950s, Chevalier stated that the *grands boulevards* at Strasbourg Saint-Denis, just on the edge of the neighborhood, were the “great meeting point of the city” for people of all classes and professions, except for wealthy, elegant women who often looked down upon it and felt uncomfortable there at night.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ See Alain Giraudo, “Boxe : la mort de Jean Bretonnel. Un gentleman des rings,” *Le Monde* (Paris, February 16, 1990); Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875; Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 233–236.

¹⁵⁰ Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 234.

¹⁵¹ Giraudo, “Boxe : la mort de Jean Bretonnel. Un gentleman des rings.”

¹⁵² Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 235.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 149–150.

For most Parisians who were not regular visitors to the area, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was near the places where they would go out at night. Teenagers and adults in their twenties flocked to the boulevards to dance, eat, and drink. An older crowd came to the many theaters, cinemas, and famous brasseries and restaurants that filled the area. For those who wanted to stay out late after the metro closed around 1am, four of the city's ten night bus lines passed through the area, providing easy access to many parts of the city and suburbs late into the night.¹⁵⁵ While some would enter the narrower streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the boulevards were a place *à part*, distinct and attractive enough to remain the one of the centers for nighttime visitors in Paris.

Dance clubs for a younger crowd filled the boulevards in the early 1960s. The Eldorado, just outside the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station at 4 Boulevard de Strasbourg was the most important dance club and movie theater in the neighborhood.¹⁵⁶ The venue had been famous as a more expensive, classier *café-concert*—an establishment with operetta, comedy, or other popular music performances—more for the middle-class than for workers.¹⁵⁷ Rebuilt to house a 2,000-seat modern movie theater in the 1930s, the Eldorado had evolved in the 1950s to host dance parties late in the evening in a venue called “Le Dancing de l’Eldorado” with a separate entrance.¹⁵⁸ Miami Dancing, another dance club for young people where they played American pop music day and night, was located near the Bonne-Nouvelle metro at 3 Impasse Bonne-Nouvelle.¹⁵⁹ A few doors down the boulevard was a similar *dancing* called Le Zodiac.¹⁶⁰ They, like La Casita, a dance club run by Jean-Claude Michot nearby in the 2nd arrondissement at 167 rue Montmartre, were known for their *bals*, or big dance parties, on Saturday nights.¹⁶¹ For those who were more hesitant to dance, there was also a large billiards club, the Académie Elbo, at 8 Boulevard de Strasbourg.¹⁶²

Movie theaters were abundant, too. Beyond the Eldorado on the Boulevard de Strasbourg were five more theaters: Le Cinex (next door to the Eldorado at number 2), La Scala (number 13), Paris-Ciné (number 17), Le Brady (number 39), and Le Pacific (number 48).¹⁶³ Along the Grands Boulevards, one could have seen films at the Pathé Journal (6 Boulevard de Saint-Denis), or Le Cinéma de la Porte-Saint-Denis, also known as Strasbourg Cinéma (8 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, see Figure 8 for a view of its entryway). Once one stepped off of the boulevards, one found smaller theaters. Near the Château-d’Eau metro on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin, was

¹⁵⁵ Denaès, *Guide général de Paris.*, 160.

¹⁵⁶ See advertisement in “Le Marché du Travail.”

¹⁵⁷ For more on the Eldorado and other *café-concerts* in the nineteenth century, see Charles Rearick, “Song and Society in Turn-of-the-Century France,” *Journal of Social History* 22, no. 1 (October 1, 1988): 49–50.

¹⁵⁸ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 959.*

¹⁵⁹ “Le Marché du Travail.”

¹⁶⁰ *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 191.*

¹⁶¹ “Le Marché du Travail.”

¹⁶² *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine, 960.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 959–960.

the Casino Saint-Martin movie theater, at number 48, and the Cinéma du Château-d'Eau at 61 rue du Château-d'Eau between the Boulevard de Strasbourg and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁶⁴ Farther north along the rue de la Fidélité lay the previously mentioned Le Fidélio.¹⁶⁵

The theater and musical performance scene had been vibrant in this part of Paris since the end of the eighteenth century, even more so after the city's major redevelopment in the 1850s and 1860s. Although most of the *café-concerts* had been replaced by movie theaters by the 1920s, other musical theater, comedy, and cabaret performances continued. According to the theater listings in *France-Soir* from January 21, 1961, a random date, four of the major theaters in Paris were found on the boulevards near the Faubourg Saint-Denis. Each theater was open six days a week with one weekday closure and most had matinees around 3pm on Sunday afternoons and holidays.

Just a few doors down from the Eldorado lay the Théâtre Antoine at 15 Boulevard de Strasbourg, which specialized in comedies, many of them recently written and produced.¹⁶⁶ The Théâtre de l'Ambigu, also just outside the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro at 2 Boulevard Saint-Martin, hosted similar types of drama and comedy performances, and, like the Théâtre Antoine, were running a *comédie policière*, or mystery/comedy in January 1961.¹⁶⁷ The Théâtre du Gymnase, farther west at 38 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, hosted more serious dramas, especially after a change in management in 1962, and the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin, east of the arch of the same name, played a mix of higher-brow comedies and dramas.¹⁶⁸

The numerous cafés and restaurants in the Faubourg Saint-Denis area were greatly helped by all of this traffic to the neighborhood at night, much as the neighborhood around a stadium or an arena is transformed before and after a sporting event. A new clientele came in at night and packed a number of these businesses. Although it is hard to know which restaurants, cafés, and bars were popular among the theater, movie, and partying crowds, the food and drink establishments close to venues would have been full with attendees, as well as the few famous restaurants that were commonly known to cater to that crowd. Restaurant Julien, located in the fanciest, most architecturally elaborate building on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, number 16,

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 919, 265. According to the *taxe patente* records, these theaters were smaller than those on the Boulevard de Strasbourg or on the Grands Boulevards. These theaters were licensed to have 7 to 15 *séances*, or screenings, per week, versus their larger counterparts, who were listed as having more than 15 *séances* per week. "AdP 2477W 11,12."

¹⁶⁵ *Bottin*, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 399.

¹⁶⁶ On January 21, 1961, they were showing "L'Idiotie," a play by Marcel Achard, performed for the first time. "Le Marché du Travail"; Wikipedia contributors, "L'Idiotie," *Wikipédia* (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., August 13, 2012), <http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=L%27Idiotie&oldid=81857211>.

¹⁶⁷ They were performing *Douce Annabelle*, a play adapted from an American novel by Kelley Roos, performed for the second and last time in France. "Le Marché du Travail"; "Les Archives Du Spectacle – Douce Annabelle", n.d., http://www.lesarchivesduspectacle.net/index?IDX_Spectacle=33463.

¹⁶⁸ "Le Marché du Travail"; Wikipedia contributors, "Théâtre du Gymnase Marie-Bell," *Wikipédia* (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., September 12, 2012), http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Th%C3%A9%C3%A2tre_du_Gymnase_Marie-Bell&oldid=81632773.

has historically been known as a place to eat before or after the theater.¹⁶⁹ Brasserie Flo, located at 7 cour des Petites Ecuries, and Marguery, at 36 Boulevard de Bonne-Nouvelle, both with ornate Art Nouveau interiors similar to Julien, all offered reasonably priced meals in beautiful settings.¹⁷⁰

Of the city's "Music-Halls," as defined in *France-Soir*, two of the seven were in the surrounding area.¹⁷¹ Les Folies-Bergère, a few blocks west of the Faubourg Saint-Denis on the rue Richer, the continuation of the rue des Petites-Ecuries, continued its racy, semi-nude singing and dancing performances that had been famous since Josephine Baker took Paris by storm in the 1920s.¹⁷² Le Mayol, in the heart of the Faubourg Saint-Denis at 10 rue de l'Echiquier, held similar types of performances, which they advertised as "chic" and with nudity.¹⁷³ These were more tepid than the striptease cabaret clubs that were based in the Pigalle and Blanche neighborhoods at the southern tip of Montmartre, farther north on the edge of the 9th and 18th arrondissements.¹⁷⁴

There was a reason why Godard chose to shoot *Une femme est une femme*, in which Anna Karina played a professional music hall striptease dancer, in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. It was a plausible place for her to work and it also had a reputation, deserved or not, as a place of sex and prostitution. Records that support this are very difficult to come by for this period. With the rue Saint-Denis, Paris's historical heart of open street prostitution, just across the street on the other side of the Porte Saint-Denis, it would not be surprising to hear that this trade, like that of clothing manufacturing, traversed the Grands Boulevards to the faubourg. It was found in at least one café, *Tout va bien*, just outside of the entrance to the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station on the rue Saint-Denis side of the Boulevard Saint-Denis.¹⁷⁵

The traces are few, but we do see a culture of sex entertainment beginning to form on the edges of the neighborhood in 1960. While the Neptuna pool, at 28 Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle, had been a famous meeting place for gay men from all over the Paris region for decades, it had only in the 1950s added a pornographic movie theater in part of the building.¹⁷⁶ In Figure 7 we see the movie theater entrance on the left and the entrance to the pool on the right. Godard found it important enough to devote a shot to its façade alone. This was one of the only street shots in the film that focused on a building and not people.

¹⁶⁹ N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012"; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine*, 875.

¹⁷⁰ N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012."

¹⁷¹ "Le Marché du Travail."

¹⁷² For more on Josephine Baker at the Folies-Bergère, a topic well studied for its importance in shaping French notions of African-Americans, black women, and the exotic, see Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1996), 54–56; Karen C. C. Dalton and Henry Louis Gates, "Josephine Baker and Paul Colin: African American Dance Seen Through Parisian Eyes," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 4 (July 1, 1998): 903–934.

¹⁷³ "Le Marché du Travail."

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ See the wonderfully detailed description of life in this café in the 1940s and 1950s in Chevalier, *Histoires de la nuit parisienne*, 156–167.

¹⁷⁶ *Mémoire des rues : Paris 10e arrondissement, 1900-1940.*, 61.



Figure 7. The Neptuna gay-friendly pool and porn movie theater at 28 Boulevard de Bonne Nouvelle in *Une femme est une femme*.

This was the beginning of the era of pornographic movie theaters in Paris, one that would last until the rise of the VCR in the 1980s. Other theaters in the Faubourg Saint-Denis may have offered a certain number of pornographic films as well. Information about street prostitution is almost impossible to recover for this period because the people who remember the era are old and generally do not have precise or reliable memories of prostitutes' identities and where they worked in 1960. The police records that would show when suspected prostitutes were taken into the precinct for questions have not yet been made available to the public.

The lack of these police records poses a problem, as they are among the best sources for reconstructing street life and the use of public space in a neighborhood. Police logs for the Faubourg Saint-Denis and its surrounding areas during earlier periods suggest, though they do not prove, who might have been out on the streets of the neighborhood and what type of daily, banal events took place there. These logs provide different views of the streets from those of the other sources examined thus far, especially since some come from during World War II, a special period in the daily life of Paris. Unfortunately, these records often bring up more questions than they answer. They do, however, reveal the home addresses of most of the people involved, which gives us a way of tracing daily mobility in Paris and to see the number of visitors on the street.

The logs state, for example, on January 15, 1943 that Micheline Picard was arrested for “prostitution clandestine” on the rue de l’Echiquier at 6:30pm.¹⁷⁷ She was 24 years old at the time

¹⁷⁷ “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Denis, 1942-1944”, 1944, CB 38 58, Archives de la Préfecture de Police, January 15, 1943.

and, although she was born in Saumur in the Loire Valley, Mme Picard lived at 24 rue de Chaligny in the 12th arrondissement. While we do learn that Mme Picard was spending time on the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis during the day and that she did not live near the neighborhood, we will never know if she actually was a sex worker or if these were false charges by the police.

Looking at similar police records about prostitution arrests for the Les Halles neighborhood in January and February 1937, we get a clearer portrait about women who were spending time there. Whether or not they were sex workers, they were conspicuous users of the area's public space.¹⁷⁸ Of the twelve women arrested, one lived just outside of the markets and another within a ten minute walk. Five others lived farther away in Paris (in the 11th, 18th, and 20th arrondissements). The last five women lived in the suburbs. They had come to Les Halles from Bagnolet and Vincennes to the east, Malakoff to the south, Meudon to the southwest, and Clichy to the northeast. Of the ten people arrested for public drunkenness in the same neighborhood in January 1937, half lived locally and the other half lived a good distance from the neighborhood—two in the 19th arrondissement, one in the 20th arrondissement, one in Clichy, and one who was visiting Paris from Strasbourg.¹⁷⁹

The police records do contain information for the 10th arrondissement in 1960, but in the Porte Saint-Martin administrative neighborhood just to the east of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁸⁰ These records also suggest a similar diversity of the people out on its streets. Of the nineteen people arrested for public drunkenness (*ivresse manifeste et publique*), four lived in the 10th arrondissement. Eleven lived elsewhere in Paris: three in the working- and lower-middle-class 11th, 18th, and 20th arrondissements, one in the 8th and the 14th arrondissements. Four of the people arrested lived in the suburbs.

The same police records also reveal incidents on the street that tell us about their actors. On July 6, 1943, at around four in the afternoon, an older woman crossing the street on the corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, where Anna Karina and Nono would eventually do the same, was hit by a truck.¹⁸¹ Mme Marie Stoll, who was 76 years old at the time, “was hit and thrown to the ground by a truck...driven by René Ferdinand.”¹⁸² She was a widow who no longer worked and lived just a few blocks east of the accident, at 14 rue Taylor. A witness, Mme Gisèle Arnold, 33 years old, who was walking on the street as it happened, stated that Mme Stoll entered the crosswalk “but hesitated and retreated, and then reentered the crosswalk and moved forward.”¹⁸³ The truck driver had thought she had

¹⁷⁸ “Main courante, 1e arrondissement, Quartier des Halles, 1937-38”, 1938, CB 2 61, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1959-1960.”

¹⁸¹ “APP CB 38 58”, July 6, 1943.

¹⁸² Ibid., July 6, 1943.

¹⁸³ Ibid., July 6, 1943.

stopped and as he moved his truck forward, hit Mme Stoll. Fortunately he was moving very slowly, the police report said.

Mme Arnold had not strayed far from home. When she witnessed the event, she was a minute away from her home at 51 Boulevard de Strasbourg. The truck driver, though, worked for a company called Combustibles Modernes in a fancy part of the 17th arrondissement at 51 rue Ampère and had most likely come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to make a delivery. Mr. Ferdinand lived outside of Paris, to its northwest, in Gennevilliers, a working-class suburb. The second witness to the event, Mr. Joseph Viallaneix, 56 years old, also saw the accident from the sidewalk. He, Mr. Ferdinand, was visiting the neighborhood, possibly for work, possibly for something else. He was a taxi driver and lived at 8 rue de la Solidarité in the 19th arrondissement, near the Buttes-Chaumont park. Again, the actors are a mix of locals and non-locals.

People from much farther away also populated the cafés of the neighborhood. Just a few months later, Denise Letemplier, who was 26 years old, had her blue leather bag, filled with meat, bread, and money, stolen from her chair at the Restaurant Bougenaux at 93 Boulevard de Strasbourg. She lived in the city center of Mayenne, a city near the meeting point of Normandy, the Loire Valley, and Brittany, and was only in Paris in passing for a few days.¹⁸⁴

During the previous cold winter during World War II, two boys, Alfred Machet and Georges Naceur, both twelve years old, were caught stealing a cash box left by Vve Jeanne Moingeon, an oyster vendor, at her *quatre saisons* in front of 13 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁸⁵ According to the police records, on December 30, 1942 “at seven in the evening, while [Vve Moingeon] was at a café, Machet took the cash box that she had left on her stall and ran off with Naceur, who had had the idea to steal it. They shared 300 francs, spent at the movies and on candy, and got rid of a torn-up bill of 50 francs...”¹⁸⁶ Both boys lived in the 19th arrondissement, Machet with his parents at an undetermined address and Naceur with his mother, Olga, at 129 rue de l’Ourcq, in a poor part of Paris near the Gare de l’Est train tracks just inside the city limits.

The daily events recorded in the 1960 Porte Saint-Martin police records reveal a similar geographic diversity of actors in the neighborhood. The majority of events listed in the registries involved stolen vehicles—cars, scooters, motorcycles, and bicycles—whose owners, not surprisingly, almost always lived outside of the neighborhood.¹⁸⁷ People living in the neighborhood could protect their vehicles more easily. Mme N.T. and her husband rented a spot for their car in the secure garage at 76 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹⁸⁸ Others could have kept their bicycles inside their apartments.

Arrests by the police also add to the complexity of street activity in the neighborhood. Mr. B.D., who was 29 years old at the time of his arrest in 1960, was a homeless manual laborer

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., June 21, 1943.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., December 30, 1942.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., December 30, 1942.

¹⁸⁷ “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1959-1960.”

¹⁸⁸ N.T., “Interview with Mme N.T., November 27, 2009.”

without a visa.¹⁸⁹ Another Yugoslav, Mr. T.P., born in Zagreb, Yugoslavia was an electrician found in the Porte Saint-Martin neighborhood and was taken in by the police because he did not have a valid visa to be in France. In France, he had been living in the northwest working-class suburb of Argenteuil.¹⁹⁰

From various moments during World War II through the 1960s, a large portion of the wide variety of people who used the Faubourg Saint-Denis—including CEOs, children, and homeless illegal immigrants—lived elsewhere. It was a neighborhood whose economy, including all facets of its manufacturing and retail businesses, functioned thanks to its quotidian and visitors who came to work, shop, dance, or simply pass their time. While residents played a significant role in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, one would best characterize its space as one shared by people from all over the city and beyond its borders. To continue to tell the story of its evolution, we must look elsewhere in Paris, as the Faubourg Saint-Denis was not an isolated place.



Figure 8. Trucks on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and rue des Petites-Ecuries in *Une femme est une femme*.

We will follow this small delivery truck and the two larger ones ready to turn and follow it south on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis straight to the heart of the city—or its stomach, as many would call it. The disappearance in 1969 of Les Halles, the city’s wholesale food market and hub for all people from all places, ushered in a new era for the city’s central neighborhoods, including the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

¹⁸⁹ “Main courante, 10e arrondissement, Quartier de la Porte Saint-Martin, 1960-1961”, 1961, CB 38 116, Archives de la Préfecture de Police, entry #846, April 25, 1960.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., entry #744, April 25, 1960.

CHAPTER 3

Collapse

How Paris Lost Its Faith in Urban Redevelopment, 1969-1971



Figure 1. The pavilions of Les Halles as they were being torn down, with Saint-Eustache Church in the background, August 1971. Courtesy of Georges Azenstarck.

A strange, tremendous, unknown sound pervaded the whole city. One felt that something unusual and terrible was spreading on all its streets, dark as an abyss. From time to time a low rumbling noise was heard, like that of a gathering storm or a rising surge; but nothing clear, nothing distinct, nothing explicable, was offered to the mind; one might have said that these sounds were like the mysterious and subterranean noises that precede an earthquake.

- Alexandre Dumas, account of the Les Halles insurrection of August 26, 1648 in *Twenty Years After*, 1845¹

Since the beginning of the century, we have built only one original monument, one monument that has never been copied elsewhere, which naturally sprouted out of the earth of its time: Les Halles.

- Emile Zola²

¹ Alexandre Dumas, *Twenty Years After* (London: Collins, 1970), Chapter 47: The Riot.

And there they lay. Paris's markets, Les Halles, were gone (see Figure 1). Of course they still existed—Parisians were not going hungry in 1971—but they were missing from the center of the city. Not only had the French government under President Georges Pompidou moved the nation's most important wholesale food market to the southern suburbs of Paris in 1969, but it chose to destroy the market's old home, the twelve massive, nineteenth-century iron-and-glass pavilions built by Napoleon III, which had become a monument to life in the city (see Figures 2 and 3).

Most lovers of life and culture in Paris have lamented both of these passings. The first destroyed an economy, but more importantly, a society and its culture, one of the dearest to Parisians. The second destroyed its visual representation, one of the great symbols of old Paris. These events were a true shock to the city and have justifiably elicited some of the strongest reactions from its people during the twentieth century. While other developments and upheavals during the 1960s and early 1970s may have been equally important to the city's history and transformation, it was the removal of Les Halles from the city center and the destruction of the market's pavilions that made Parisians truly angry and turned them against the central government's attempts to reshape Paris.

From some perspectives, however, the destruction of Les Halles was not all bad. Destruction and death also brought rebirth. The removal of Les Halles to the suburbs may have brought many "For Lease" signs to storefronts throughout the city center, the neighborhood of the Faubourg Saint-Denis included. But the disappearance of the market and its economy created new opportunities. The immigrant communities in the 10th arrondissement and elsewhere around Paris owe their establishment to the cheap rents and available spaces that waited patiently for new owners and customers.

But more than simply affect the surrounding neighborhoods' development, the destruction of Les Halles riled up the Parisian population enough to turn it against redevelopment and modern architecture in the city center forever. It, along with other influential events at the same time—the construction between 1969 and 1972 of the 59-story Tour Montparnasse in the middle of a sea of six-story buildings on the Left Bank and a series of horrible fires that ravaged new buildings throughout France—the destruction of Les Halles made many people feel as if the Paris they knew so well was the victim of an assassination.³ People had had enough with the government's razing of entire neighborhoods and the construction of ugly and unsafe buildings, all of which were paid for by taxpayers in the name of progress.

² Émile Zola, *Le ventre de Paris* (Paris: Pocket, 1999), 249. Quoted in Catherine Leroy-Jay, "Requiem de poètes pour des 'Parapluies,'" *Combat*, July 15, 1971.

³ See Louis Chevalier, *The Assassination of Paris* (University Of Chicago Press, 1994). For a good background on the urban planning decisions at Les Halles in the 1960s and 1970s, see Chapter 1: "Introduction" in Julia Trilling, "Environmental Policy and Metropolitan Growth Land-use Planning in the Paris Region Since World War II" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1981).

The early 1970s marked the end of the country's long period of economic growth, the recognition of its failures since the end of the war, the closing of the country's borders to immigrants, and the birth of the new belief that Parisians could play a greater role in the city's development and politics. It is at this moment, not in 1968, when Parisians began to demand a new future for their city. Not only did Les Halles tumble down, but so did the vision of building a modern, uncongested, new center in Paris.



Figure 2. The Les Halles pavilions, photographed in the 1860s during their construction by Charles Marville. Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.



Figure 3. The interior of one of the market pavilions at Les Halles, photographed in the 1860s by Charles Marville. Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Although there was a vocal, active opposition to the removal of Les Halles to the suburbs since the first attempts to relocate it in the 1930s, it could not have won its primary battle. In the long term, keeping the region's central food market open in the city center would have meant the denial of a fundamental transformation of the French economy. Paris had changed—its population and economy were shrinking while those of its suburbs were growing. To remain open and profitable in the city center, its central markets—Les Halles and La Villette, the city's main slaughterhouse and meat market—would have had to fight a steep uphill battle against both the forces of a new economy of food distribution and a vision of urban planning that sought to unclog and to modernize the city center.

During the second half of the twentieth century, cities around the world saw their wholesale markets move outside of the city. With massive population and economic growth in metropolitan areas, mainly caused by suburban growth, it was inevitable that the central site for food distribution would move to a new location with easier access to its suburbs. Between 1954

and 1968, for example, the Ile-de-France region (an administrative unit that is a good measurement for Paris's greater metropolitan area) gained, on average, 138,000 people per year, growing from 7.3 million to 9.2 million people.⁴ During the same period, Paris's population dropped from 2.85 million to 2.59 million people, a loss of 260,000 people, or almost 10% of its population.⁵ The clients of Les Halles were moving away from Paris. With the construction of national highway systems, ready to be exploited by delivery trucks, and with the rising importance of air freight coming through newly-expanded airports, city centers filled with cars and pedestrians were the least efficient places to locate markets.

The same patterns emerged even within the city limits. Paris's population and industry were increasingly found farther from the city center. Between the two censuses of 1954 and 1968, the central arrondissements (the 1st through the 11th) lost 160,300 people, while the exterior arrondissements lost only 99,200. This difference is even more significant when one considers that the central arrondissements contained only 36% of the city's population in 1954 and only 31% of its land. In this fourteen year period, Paris's center lost 15.6% of its population while its exterior arrondissements lost only 5.4% of its residents.⁶ The city's industries followed suit. Many of the industrial businesses in the city center moved to the suburbs or even to other cities in France. Industrial jobs fled the city in favor of the service industry. At its high point in 1954, over 700,000 of the city's jobs were in industry—construction, metallurgy, clothing manufacturing, and such—but this number, by the end of the century, had dropped to only 175,000.⁷ The economy of the city center would, like all big cities in the developed world, become focused on providing services. In the early 1970s, Paris was reaching the end of the beginning of this process of economic and demographic transformation.

This transformation was not entirely natural—the government acted aggressively to push this forward. At the time, the most widely read urban policy book in France was Jean-François Gravier's *Paris et le désert français* (*Paris and the French Desert*), which had made a convincing argument that Paris had grown too much and was too important relative to other places in its region and in France. Published first in 1947, it came out in a second edition in 1953 and was still relevant in 1972 when its third edition appeared. Paris, the center of French government, economy, culture, and education, needed to be weakened because it was preventing growth in the rest of the country. In response, other places needed to be supported and funded by the government in order to help them grow and attract more businesses, taxpayers, and institutions. The planners in charge of this project hoped to build up five economic nodes in the Paris region, one of which, located near Rungis, a southern suburb, would contain the future site of Les Halles.

⁴ Jean Bastié, *Paris de 1945 à 2000*, Nouvelle histoire de Paris (Paris: Association pour la publication d'une histoire de Paris, 2000), 107.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 152, 163.

Besides demographic pressures and the engineer's desire for maximum efficiency, there was a growing belief among all people involved in shaping Paris—planners, government officials, architects, residents—that the city center needed to be greener. Municipal and national governments also made a priority of unclogging city centers of traffic and of old-fashioned manufacturing industries.

Not only did the city as an abstract whole have to meet certain criteria relative to air purity, automobile traffic, and other measures of environmental quality, but urban space itself was expected to be green, clean, and orderly. Quiet, cleanliness, and “nature” were the guiding aesthetic principles of this movement. From the moment at the end of the war when these ideas began to have political influence, cities all over Europe, especially those that had been heavily damaged during the fighting, attempted to create new types of urban spaces in the city center.⁸ They were built tall and spread out, cheaply and quickly. Part of this was imperative—there was not much money to be spent and there was a desperate need to house a significant homeless population. But many of the results, especially the ideas and backbone of these urban plans, came not from pressing needs but from a vision that public urban space had been too congested, dirty, unsanitary, and ugly for a very long time. While Paris was barely touched by the war, it was this vision of urban space that influenced its eventual reconstruction up to and through the destruction of Les Halles and, in some of its aspects, into the second decade of the 21st century.

This was not a new set of ideas, by any means, either for Paris or for other large cities around the world. Since the nineteenth century there had been a significant movement to bring large public parks, open spaces, and fresh air to cities. Even during the Renaissance, architects and thinkers believed that the ideal city should be clean and orderly, often resembling a smaller town in the countryside than a busy urban space.⁹ The disorder on city streets was something to be feared and controlled. Over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the architecture of cities—its high density, narrow streets, without light and fresh air—was seen as the main culprit in the development of the city's evils.¹⁰ This era's anti-urban ideology came to

⁸ For a story of early postwar reconstruction in Germany, but with similar approaches to planning, see Clara Magdalena Oberle, “City in Transit: Ruins, Railways, and the Search for Order in Postwar Berlin (1945-1948)” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 2006). For an examination of the French government's postwar urban planning approaches, see Kenny Cupers, “In Search of the User: The Experiment of Modern Urbanism in Postwar France, 1955-1975” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2010); Charissa N. Terranova, “French State Vernacular: Les Grands Ensembles and Non-conformist Modernism, 1930-1973” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2004). For the intellectual development of these urban planning ideas, see Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002).

⁹ The treatises on architecture and cities by Leon Battista Alberti and Filarete, while their approaches and viewpoints differ, both believe that cities needed to be ordered so as to function correctly and to create the ideal conditions for civic life. For more on Alberti's aversion to disorganized city life, see Caspar Pearson, *Humanism and the Urban World: Leon Battista Alberti and the Renaissance City* (State College, PA: Penn State Press, 2011).

¹⁰ See Part Two, “Purifying Public Space,” in Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

influence the development of the disciplines of urban planning and architecture, which, in postwar Paris, worked to rid the city of these problems.

Not surprisingly, considering the establishment's urban vision during the postwar era, Les Halles was put straight onto the chopping block. To make Paris modern, sleek, quiet, and neat, there was no solution more obvious and simple than getting rid of the main market, located directly in the geographic center of the city. Its visibility, however, made it a special case. Not only would its removal clean up Paris, but it would set an example for how to modernize France. This was a project for the national government, seeking to exert its influence on Paris, just as it had and would do time and time again.

The government, however, using similar powers had chosen to expand the La Villette meat market in Paris only ten years before. It decided to build the region's future slaughterhouse and meat market—which was to be the most modern version in all of Europe—on the ruins of the nineteenth-century complex inside Paris in the 19th arrondissement. The government here pleased local businesses and residents in the market's vicinity because it was planning a massive investment—originally estimated at 174 million francs, but which grew to be one of the most expensive infrastructure developments in all of Paris at a cost of 1.2 billion francs (the equivalent of \$1.4 billion in 2012 US dollars)¹¹—in the neighborhood's future. The state did not believe that Paris had to be gutted of all its industry.

La Villette, however, while located in Paris, lay on its edges. It would have been inconceivable for the government to build one of the messiest, smelliest, and, without a doubt, bloodiest, of all sites in France in Paris proper, even if it was to be the most modern, cleanest slaughterhouse in the world. For this project to have been possible, the 19th arrondissement had to be viewed as a different type of space in the city than Les Halles. While it was one of the city's largest arrondissements, both in area and population, it was considered, often unconsciously, by those involved in the development of Paris as being different in kind than those in the city center. The arrondissements around the city's fringes—the 12th through the 20th, all of which were made up of smaller independent municipalities brought under the jurisdiction of Paris by Haussmann in 1860—were places ripe for development, growth, and modernization. In reference to their past history, the government and planners viewed these arrondissements as suburbs, places where history did not prevent them from applying their vision of modern development.

La Villette's future as a slaughterhouse and meat market was a short one. Its failure, however, was not due to the impracticality of having such a large industrial site in Paris, but because of poor management and financing. After having almost entirely finished the rebuilding project, the market's administration revealed that its business model was failing to bring in

¹¹ See Antoine Courrière and Pierre Giraud, "Proposition de Résolution instituant une Commission d'enquête parlementaire sur le fonctionnement des sociétés d'économie mixte chargées de l'aménagement et de la gestion des abattoirs et du marché d'intérêt national Paris - La Villette.," *Sé debates*, Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 8 octobre 1970 (October 8, 1970), <http://www.senat.fr/leg/ppr70-005.pdf>.

sufficient revenue to pay off debts. The model, unfortunately too well known in the history of the nineteenth and twentieth century, was to take out debt for the building on the assumption that the government would be able to repay it through monthly rents on its stalls and through increased tax revenues collected from the profits of vendors. Of course, not enough vendors purchased booths to meet the needs of the state's expected revenue, and, therefore, in 1971, just a few years after the reopening of the still-unfinished plant, the state decided to cut its losses and plan for the meat market's relocation to Rungis to integrate it with Les Halles. Not surprisingly, this was one of the bigger scandals to damage the French government at the time. A write-off for the state of over a billion francs for a failed project that would have to be completely rebuilt elsewhere angered many, whether they were government officials, French taxpayers, or the Parisian public, who felt cheated. In late 1970, Senate members from the Socialist party, who were still seething from the government's response to the 1968 crisis, created a commission to investigate the mismanagement of the development project that created, what they called, the "La Villette scandal."¹² Paris was left with a sprawling plot of land with abandoned buildings, a massive dent in its budget, and a population angry with the government and its approach to building in Paris.

In hindsight and with an understanding of the reigning urban vision as well as the demographic and economic pressures in Paris, it is clear that Les Halles, La Villette, and other industrial areas were eventually bound to be removed from the city. But by the late 1960s and early 1970s people were ready to fight—even physically—for their city. Les Halles, in particular, stood not only for the destruction of a market and a monument, but also for what made Paris an exciting city. Its removal provoked not only political arguments but sadness in many people; its destruction made Parisians question more than ever before whether French postwar economic growth had gone too far in trying to change the city. Paris, in the 1950s and 1960s, was a city with two types of urban politics—one of protection, deindustrialization, and isolated redevelopment, the other of demolition, economic development at all costs, and mass housing.

By the early 1970s, many Parisians—both those who benefited directly from the business generated by the two markets and those who appreciated their culture, excitement, and energy—felt abandoned by their national and municipal governments, who, as they saw it, were trying to kill Paris and gift its remains to real estate developers. The fields of architecture and urban planning, too, had become tainted. For some, who toed the Left's party line, the army of the enemy, led by the state and big business, hired architects and urban planners as its mercenaries. For others, these soldiers were doing shoddy, uninspired work, plain and simple. It was at this point that ordinary people started to criticize modern architecture and contemporary urban planning for being reckless in their desire to destroy, for building too cheaply and too quickly, and for the ugliness they left in their wake. As one writer for the left-wing weekly, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, put it:

¹² Ibid.

It is not only because of the ghost of La Villette that the renovation project of Les Halles is provoking such anxiety and antipathy: it also crystallizes all the resentment of Parisians in regards to the new Paris, to this hideous and unlivable Paris that we are in the process of imposing on them, to the Paris of offices and towers, to the Paris of speculators, builders, and real estate banks, where all the one loves is destroyed or disfigured for no other reasons than racketeering and financial return.¹³

This perceived collusion of the state, developers, banks, architects, and planners, acting with disregard for the interests of the city's users, damned these development projects in the eyes of many Parisians.

Once the markets at Les Halles moved to Rungis in the south of Paris and the impending economic transformation of the neighborhood was a given, the major question involved the future of the twelve iron and glass pavilions built by Baltard that were left on site. The government plan was to raze them in order to make way for a massive underground project with a shopping center, Paris's largest metro and regional rail station, a sports center, movie theater, and parking lots. Above ground, as one would expect, a large park was planned to replace the market pavilions, adding a new green space to the center of the city, as the urban planning of the period demanded.

After large portions of the market were moved to Rungis in 1969, various state-run organizations and community groups had jumped at the opportunity to put the vacant pavilions to use even if only for a short time. Such immense, enclosed spaces were a rarity in Paris—only the Grand Palais was of similar stature. Over the next two years, the old marketplace was transformed into a cultural center. It offered a wide range of offerings, from a classical guitar recital of Paco Ibañez, to a performance of *Orlando Furioso*, one of the great sixteenth-century Italian epics about the worldwide wanderings of its hero, by a theater group from Rome.¹⁴

As Paris did not yet have a great modern art museum, the government took the opportunity to hold a large Picasso exhibit inside one of the pavilions. Another pavilion held the city's biggest art fair, the Salon des Antiquaires, which brought collectors and dealers of Old Master paintings and sculpture out of their elegant galleries and hotels in the 7th and 8th arrondissements to a part of the city empty of fine art and culture.¹⁵ Many people imagined that these beautiful buildings could be used for a higher purpose than butchery. These events could therefore attract a new crowd to the area, one more refined and able to contribute to neighborhood redevelopment, while also bringing fine culture to an area that, according to the government, desperately needed it.

Others saw the opportunity to bring more popular events to the pavilions to attract not only art lovers, but families and a younger generation that grew up in the 1960s. By no means did the pavilions house any events coming close to being considered rebellious, but some were a bit

¹³ André Fermigier, "Qui a vendu Les Halles ?," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, July 12, 1971.

¹⁴ Claude Cabanes, "Halles de Paris : parapluiies et bulldozers," *L'Humanité Dimanche*, June 30, 1971.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

edgier than the art exhibits and theater performances. In the late-1960s, the music of Django Reinhardt, France's most celebrated jazz musician, was back in style after two decades when it had been cast aside for fresher, more exciting bebop music. One night, during the "Cinéma Jazz-Festival" at Les Halles, a film directed by Paul Paviot in homage to the guitarist, creatively titled *Django Reinhardt*, was shown to a packed crowd, who also got the chance to dance to an amateur jazz big band that performed after the movie. A circus, led by Jean Richard, set up shop in one of the pavilions. And for most of the two years, a *fête foraine*, or public fair, occupied two entire pavilions.¹⁶ All in all, these metal and glass structures were shown to be capable of glorifying much more than meat and produce.

The markets and the crowds of people they brought to the neighborhood diminished significantly in 1969 with the move of parts of the market to Rungis and ended completely in 1972 with the departure of the meat market. Non-residents, however, continued to be the largest group of people animating the site of Les Halles and the surrounding neighborhood. Although these visitors were no longer coming to the neighborhood to support an urban economy centered on commerce and trade, many of the businesses surrounding the market—restaurants, cafés, grocery stores, among others—remained open during the early 1970s thanks to this cultural traffic and the enduring reputation of the nightlife around Les Halles. The development plan put forth by the government to destroy the pavilions would leave the neighborhood empty of any attraction for a number of years, save for the hole caused by the buildings' destruction.¹⁷

The Paris Municipal Council approved the state's development plan (*le Plan d'aménagement du quartier des Halles*) on October 29, 1970 by a vote of 51 to 37, with the Left voting against it.¹⁸ Although it did not have enough power to block the state's plan for the neighborhood, this was a symbolic vote. The government institution that had been the most protective of the old Paris city center and had fought against large state-run development projects in the city had capitulated. They would not try to stop the destruction of Baltard's nineteenth-century pavilions. By the end of 1970, the government had formally approved the development project and prepared to demolish six of the twelve pavilions on July 1, 1971. The countdown had begun.

The project was estimated to cost 110 million francs (approximately \$130 million dollars in 2012), though certain press outlets believed that the government had been vastly underestimating the final budget, just as it had for the La Villette project.¹⁹ The public believed that the government, especially Marcel Diebolt, the prefect of Paris, was set on choosing the Les Halles site for the future RER station, even though some engineers believed that it would be more efficient and cheaper to situate it a few hundred meters to the east underneath Boulevard

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ The hole left by the destruction of the pavilions attracted visitors in the same way that the previous site of the World Trade Center in Manhattan attracted tourists in the years after their collapse in 2001.

¹⁸ Cabanes, "Halles de Paris : parapluies et bulldozers."

¹⁹ Fermigier, "Qui a vendu Les Halles ?".

Sebastopol. There, the area underground was empty and would not entail the destruction of the pavilions.²⁰

As June arrived, cultural events continued in the six pavilions slated to be dismantled. The *fête foraine*, still occupying two entire pavilions, was as popular as ever with families and children who came for its amusement park atmosphere. Another pavilion was being used for a massive *brocante*, or flea market. High culture still had its place, too. Students from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France's leading art school, exhibited their work, while an experimental theater troupe from Tokyo and a French contemporary ballet group performed.²¹

That month, the police started to worry about potential violence caused by protesters in the neighborhood around the pavilions. "It seems that the arrival of July 1 and the different rumors circulating about the destruction of Baltard's Les Halles have brought unrest to the area," wrote Maurice Gravaud, the police commissioner in the 1st arrondissement in charge of streets, to his boss on June 9.²² Gravaud focused his attention on neighborhood and student groups, which he thought would be the most likely to cause problems for the police. At that time in early June, they were the two groups most stridently protesting. He had heard rumors that residents, led by Marc Augarde, the President of the Artisan and Shopkeeper Association of the Center of Paris and Les Halles, were forming a committee to defend the pavilions from destruction. The police viewed Augarde as dangerous because he was the leader of the shopkeepers, the group which had the most to lose if all activity at Les Halles was halted for five or more years during the construction. Gravaud believed that if Augarde were to be involved with the protests, he would surely have a significant following from other shopkeepers and residents in the neighborhood:²³

He is to be feared in the current context, and due to the coming transformations to this neighborhood, every undertaking susceptible of bringing together a great popular mass of people must inevitably bring us trouble, as certain elements could attempt to take advantage of [the situation] to push the simple festivities to degenerate into a protest that would be difficult to control.²⁴

The police were right to be worried. Parisian shop owners, though not necessarily their employees, had been at the center of revolutionary activity and protest in the city since the French Revolution of 1789 continuing through the Third Republic in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁵

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Letter from Gravaud (Commissaire de la Voirie de la Police, 1st arrondissement) to the Directeur-Général de la Voirie of the Police Municipale, 'Physiognomy of the old Les Halles neighborhood. Threats relating to the demolition of the markets,'" June 9, 1971, *Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Correspondances*, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ See Philip Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers and the Politics of Resentment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 6–10.

After the role of students in fomenting fighting in the streets in May 1968 and the general fear of students worldwide—epitomized by the Ohio National Guard’s murder of four unarmed students who were protesting at Kent State University on May 4, 1970—Gravaud also warned his director about a group of architecture students from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The association in charge of the cultural events in pavilion #10, “Construction and Humanism,” was ready to cede control of the space—where the ballet and a sculpture exhibition were currently taking place—to these students who planned to stage a sit-in and hunger strike.²⁶ Although the students’ motivations were not as personal as those of the neighborhood organizations—the architecture students took issue with the government’s desire to destroy important examples of Parisian architecture, not because their homes, jobs, and income would be lost—the police believed them to be strident enough to cause problems. Gravaud expected that protests led by these movements, combined with elevated press coverage, could “generate serious incidents” in the neighborhood.²⁷

National politicians at the time agreed. According to George Pompidou, France’s president, the French government, if threatened, “would defend itself, ready to talk to everyone, but ready, if necessary, to fight, so that the tide flows back and the Chinese paper lamps of the revolutionary celebration are extinguished.”²⁸ The May 1968 protests had seriously scarred Pompidou and his administration. In 1968, as Prime Minister under Charles de Gaulle, he had found himself at the center of the action both when the government teetered on the edge of collapse and when it recovered and turned the nation against the rebellion. For him, the students were to blame: “Believing in nothing—relieved of all traditional bonds—...having disowned God, the family, the homeland, morality, pretending to have class conscience, all while knowing perfectly that they are not workers, even less members of the proletariat, without any vocation or occupation, and, as a result, hopeless, they could only turn to negation, refusal, [and] destruction.”²⁹ He saw all the evils of modern society embodied in French students and their Communist and Maoist leanings. His government and police were on alert at Les Halles for more actions by these dangerous, misguided students.

Throughout the month of June, new neighborhood organizations supporting the preservation of Les Halles seemed to materialize every few days. The police generally learned of them through intelligence work done in the neighborhood and through the leaflets the new groups distributed on street corners. The groups were all low-budget and homegrown, arising out of a widespread anger among residents, students, and shopkeepers. Most did not have clear ties to political parties, but the police treated them all as part of a radical Left.

The police had been alerted almost a week in advance to activity in the neighborhood planned for the night of June 24. As Gravaud had suggested, the police rejected the requests of

²⁶ “Letter from Gravaud, APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Correspondances.”

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Georges Pompidou, *Le nœud gordien* (Paris: Plon, 1974), 33.

²⁹ Ibid., 28.

Augarde's group to hold a street fair and of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts student group to place an open microphone in one of the pavilions where anyone who desired could speak to the crowd about the urban environment. At the same time, according to the police, a stereo "would diffuse 'Pop' music."³⁰ On June 21, Mr. Baer, the director of SEMAH (the Société d'Economie Mixte de l'Aménagement des Halles), the public-private partnership in charge of developing Les Halles, had also informed the police that protesters planned to demolish a fence in the area, attack his organization's offices next to Les Halles, and assemble in a few locations in the neighborhood on the 24th.

On the 23rd, the police received intelligence—through informants and leaflets found in the neighborhood and elsewhere in the city—that Augarde's neighborhood group and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts student group would hold their protests without permits. The student group attached its posters to the walls of the pavilions:

LES HALLES BELONG TO US.

everywhere the urban planners cops with authority are doing away with the streets and the city.
they are getting rid of life.

No to expulsions

We demand that the walls be taken down around the premises and are used

Let's make the Baltard pavilions our own

We'll all be present on the night of June 24 and at all protests

G.A.L.E. [Action Group for the Liberation of the Environment]³¹

The police also detained a man for questioning in Montmartre, more than two miles from the site, where he was found passing out the same fliers to tourists who were visiting the Sacré-Coeur, the city's most important pilgrimage church.³² The protests, now looking to attract even tourists, were beginning to get too big for the police.

Then, early in the morning on the 23rd at one of the most famous late-night restaurants at Les Halles, *Le Pied de Cochon*, diners, eating the restaurant's famous onion soup, were confronted by a dozen screaming protesters. The demonstrators came inside and started fighting with the staff and patrons who tried to force them out. Before the protesters left, they brandished paintbrushes and defaced the restaurant's beautiful late-19th century mirrors with the message "Everyone to the protest at Les Halles on June 24, 1971."³³ Why write the year unless the date

³⁰ "Note from R. Bonnet, Commissaire Principale of the 1st arrondissement to the Directeur Général of the Police Municipale", June 18, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971: Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition du Pavillon Baltard, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

³¹ "APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971 : Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition du Pavillon Baltard", 1971.

³² "Internal note", June 23, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971: Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition du Pavillon Baltard, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

³³ "Note from R. Bonnet, APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971."

would be important enough to be remembered? The protesters believed it would and the police hoped it would not.

A group calling itself the Association de défense des locataires des Ilôts Beaubourg-Saint Martin (The Renters of Beaubourg-Saint Martin Defense Association) made its first public appearance on the morning of June 24 when its members passed out leaflets advertising their first meeting that same evening.³⁴ The preservation of Les Halles was not their primary issue—their members lived a few blocks from the pavilions and were much more concerned about their homes being demolished as part of Pompidou’s urban renewal program. The president planned to build a national museum of modern art, now aptly called the Pompidou Center, directly where they resided. According to the French government, the renters lived in an officially designated “unsanitary housing block” (*îlot insalubre*), giving the state the right to use eminent domain laws to appropriate the land, demolish the buildings, and rebuild as they saw fit.

How unsanitary these buildings actually were was open to question. While many of the buildings were run-down and contained apartments without modern amenities, like toilets or showers—they were often shared on a hallway—they were not the slums the government claimed. If this standard had indeed been applied consistently across Paris, most of the city center would have received the same designation.

As members of the association passed out pamphlets on the corner of rue Rambuteau and rue du Temple, they asked passersby to sign their petition against the destruction of their homes and invited them to come out that evening at 6:30 p.m. to the same intersection “if the weather was nice” to join them in their exhibition of “marionettes, a marching band, and slide projections to make known [their] displeasure,” followed by a march toward Les Halles.³⁵ This was to be a peaceful protest and, unfortunately for them, one doomed to fail because the razing of older buildings in the Beaubourg neighborhood did not receive nearly as much political attention as the destruction of Les Halles.

Not surprisingly, the police monitored the gathering that night. According to their records, only twenty people showed up at the street corner and they were all under twenty years old. Although this was not a great showing for the organization, the police did notice that many buildings had put up banners on their façades to protest their demolition, including:

NO TO THE DEMOLITION—BUILDING WINNER OF THE PALME D’OR IN 1903.
The 70 residents of the building will not leave.
NO to wrecking crews.
[35-37 rue Beaubourg]

We will not go to Sarcelles.

³⁴ “APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Tracts Affichés”, 1971.

³⁵ Ibid.

Not only would elegant, prize-winning buildings be torn down, but the residents would have to move to Sarcelles. Sarcelles—France’s best known *ville nouvelle* or “new city”—had a terrible reputation for being too modern. Built about ten miles north of Paris, it became the symbol of a France without character, life, and culture, even though life was never as bad as people made it out to be. It was actually wealthier than many other suburbs and had less crime. It was the place, however, to which these residents feared they would have to move if they were evicted.

Some of these residents joined the twenty young protesters and marched to Les Halles. Once they arrived there, they met the banned street party organized by the Association of Shopkeepers and Artisans of the Paris Center and Les Halles, led by Marc Augarde. They put on a fireworks display and invited stores to stay open all night to show the vibrancy of the neighborhood.³⁷ Over 6,000 people came to the party, named “Cockt’halles” by Augarde’s group of shop owners, who served drinks from their storefronts to circumvent the police order forbidding them from selling drinks on the street.

By the end of the night only a few people had drawn the serious attention of the police. At 10 p.m., approximately two hundred gay and lesbian members of the Revolutionary Homosexual Action Front were parading with a banner.³⁸ They surrounded the car of one of the police officers and proceeded to dance and sing.³⁹ The police did not react with violence or with arrests, as they sometimes did when dealing with groups that they did not like. They did, however, detain one man who threw beer bottles “and various projectiles” at officers.

According to Gravaud, the police commissioner of the 1st arrondissement, 80 to 90 percent of the 6,000 visitors were “totally indifferent” to the protests, though many enjoyed the singing and dancing in the streets.⁴⁰ The evening, to the dismay of the students, was more of big party than a successful protest. Augarde and his neighborhood association, however, may have viewed the night as a success for having shown the government that the neighborhood was a place that ordinary people used and enjoyed, if only to shop and drink cockt’halles.

The final rallying cries of preservationists were heard as the demolition became imminent. Louis de Charbonnières, a journalist writing for the left-wing paper, *Combat*, exhorted supporters

³⁶ “Report from André Phillipon, a police officer”, June 24, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 25 Juin 1971—Plateau Beabourg Hotel de Ville: Manifestation organisée par Association défense des locataires des îlots Saint Martin et Beabourg, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

³⁷ “Manifestations Importantes: Manifestations dans le quartier des Halles”, June 24, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Main Courante, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ “Report from officer Leclair”, June 25, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971: Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition du Pavillon Baltard, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

⁴⁰ “Letter from Gravaud to the Sous-Directeur and Directeur of Police in the 8th district”, June 25, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 24 Juin 1971: Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition du Pavillon Baltard, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

to fight in the final days: “Already, tens of thousands of Parisians have signed the petition demanding the conservation [of the pavilions]. Are we going to organize and stand guard over Les Halles?”⁴¹ He looked for inspiration from the recent successes of protesters in Geneva and Stockholm to prevent the destruction of “beautiful large trees” in their city centers. In Stockholm, protesters had surrounded the trees and refused to allow the lumberjacks to touch the trees without resorting to violence. For de Charbonnières, if Parisians would come out in numbers, they could also force the government to stop its operation.⁴²

On the night of June 30, approximately 200 students from various universities in Paris marched from the Mutualité building on the Left Bank to Les Halles in protest of the pavilions’ destruction. They had just left a 9 p.m. press conference led by Simone de Beauvoir on the theme “Freedom of Expression in France.” The police stopped them as soon as they arrived at the markets, demanded to see their papers, and then forced them to disperse.⁴³ Over the course of the evening, the police took 28 people in for questioning—a mix of students and neighborhood locals—and let them all go by the end of the evening.⁴⁴ By 1 a.m. that night, they had succeeded in returning Les Halles to its “normal physiognomy.”⁴⁵ It had been yet another lackluster showing for those, like de Charbonnières, who cared about the pavilions.

The protesters who did show up waved signs showing their disapproval of the impending destruction of the pavilions:

Sauvez les pavillons des Halles! [Save the Les Halles pavilions!]

Stop bulldozer stop bulldozer [written in English]

Desperation brought humor as well:

Paris a mal au ventre, signé Zola [Paris has a belly ache, signed Zola]⁴⁶

Their anger was localized and focused on the issue at hand—the pavilions—regardless of how inevitable defeat seemed to be. For many of those who wanted to save the structures, the protests were “useless,” as an elderly woman living in the neighborhood put it. “This needed to be done two years ago. Now, it’s finished. We will raze everything,” she said, as if she herself would sit in the driver’s seat of the bulldozer.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Louis de Charbonnières, “Monter la garde aux Halles ?,” *Combat*, July 1, 1971.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ “Manifestation hier aux Halles,” *Le Figaro*, July 1, 1971.

⁴⁴ “APP, Démolition des Halles—Main Courante”, 1971.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ “Région Parisienne—Halles : les démolisseurs s’installent,” *Combat*, July 1, 1971.

⁴⁷ “Paris et sa région—Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition des pavillons,” *La Croix*, July 14, 1971.

While some Parisians knew that the end of the pavilions was near, none knew what would come to the site after they were destroyed. The government's plans were still amorphous, mainly because the public had not heard anything about the project other than that there would be a new "forum" built there, including a central regional train station and the requisite hotels, offices, and shopping mall that accompanied most urban developments at the time.

According to a journalist at the daily *L'Aurore*, the public had justly chastised the administration for having kept secret as much information as possible about the development project.⁴⁸ Only on June 30, the day of the protest and just a day before the pavilions' planned destruction, did the Prefect of Paris, Marcel Diebolt, unveil the models and plans for the future Les Halles at a public exhibition at the Hôtel de Ville (City Hall). Diebolt was empowered by a vote the day before in the Municipal Council where he was given the right to get to work on the project by a vote of 53 to 37, even though a centrist group of thirteen members tried to put a hold on the project just a week before.⁴⁹ Diebolt was wary of visitors' responses to the models; they were guarded by men dressed in civilian clothes with "exceptional muscle structure."⁵⁰ "Isn't it too late?" asked the journalist, who suggested that the state refused to get involved in the debate over the destruction of the pavilions because it would only create delays in the development project.⁵¹ The government was standing strong in its quest to bring its project to fruition, readying itself for more serious demonstrations that it feared would occur in the coming days.

A few days earlier, the police had begun to investigate closely various left-wing groups that were planning to protest at Les Halles. These groups were much more worrisome for the police than the local groups. They were better organized, more militant, and came to Les Halles not only because they cared about its future but because they saw it as an advantageous battleground against the state and the interests of French business. Les Halles was of such great symbolic importance to Parisians—much more so than La Villette—that larger organized protests were a legitimate fear of the police. For the radical Left, the destruction of Les Halles was an easy opportunity to rally supporters from the entire region, bring them into the neighborhood to lead the protests, and potentially bruise Pompidou's government. The police and the government, with May 1968 still fresh in their minds, had reason to believe that there would be trouble.

Intelligence divisions within the police began monitoring the French Communist Party (PCF) on June 26, as the party prepared to get involved in the fight. They planned a June 28 meeting and internal debate devoted to Les Halles for about 30 members on rue Montmartre, just two blocks from the market.⁵² The police planned to send an undercover agent to monitor the discussion, as they believed that a higher-up from the PCF would be attending the meeting.

⁴⁸ J.-P. Migeon, "Sursis pour les Halles," *L'Aurore*, July 1, 1971.

⁴⁹ Fermigier, "Qui a vendu Les Halles?"

⁵⁰ André Fermigier, "Espoir aux Halles," *Le Nouvel Observateur*, July 19, 1971.

⁵¹ Migeon, "Sursis pour les Halles."

⁵² "APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Blancs des Renseignements Généraux", 1971..

On July 1 the police were nervous. They worried that the radical Left would come out in large numbers to protest the demolition. Incendiary articles, which had been appearing all week in the press, such as Louis de Charbonnières's article in *Combat*, had put the authorities on general alert. More explicitly, on June 30 at 5:30 p.m., an officer found the following graffiti on one of the pavilion's walls:

SAVE LES HALLES, OCCUPY THE PAVILIONS, EVERYONE INSIDE THE PAVILIONS AT
6 A.M. ON JULY 1.⁵³

Not surprisingly, the police were there in large numbers at 6:00 a.m. Only 30 people showed up and it was an easy job for the police (though 30 people at six o'clock in the morning is an impressive showing, especially considering the discouraging effect of a heavy police presence). Some protesters were taken in for questioning and the rest quickly fled. The police continued to patrol the neighborhood all day.⁵⁴

Throughout the day, "Radio Halles," a self-proclaimed pirate "radio" station operated not over the airwaves but by word-of-mouth. Set up on the corner of rue Rambuteau and rue Pierre-Lescot, its goal was to spread to as many passersby as possible updated news on the destruction of the pavilions and on incidents between the police and "defenders of the neighborhood."⁵⁵ Even though the people on the corner were speaking out against the police and government, the police ignored them. Radio Halles's small size, local membership, and unthreatening means of protest allowed it to continue to "broadcast" unharmed.

Surprisingly, as the day passed, the bulldozers did not budge. At the last minute, Doublet announced that he had pushed back the demolition until July 15 but gave no more information to the public. The delay gave hope to the movement against the destruction. While the more sober-minded among the activists speculated that the delay was the result of a July 15 termination date on the vendors' contracts in one of the pavilions, others believed that the government was negotiating a deal with a group of American investors led by the young banker, Orrin Hein, to buy the pavilions and reinstall them at market sites in the United States and in France.⁵⁶ Although Hein had already met with Diebolt on June 8 and had had his offer rejected, he was still attempting to convince the government to sell him the pavilions. Whatever the reason for the delay, fifteen extra days created a small window of opportunity to change the government's plan.

At 10:30 p.m., the last cultural event in the pavilions took place as scheduled, in peace and quiet.⁵⁷ An audience saw a production of Berthold Brecht's 1930 play, "The Exception and the Rule," organized by a left-wing theater group. In it, an oil merchant, who must cross a desert to

⁵³ "APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Notes d'Informations/Renseignements Locaux", 1971.

⁵⁴ Françoise Espinasse, "La police surveille les Halles," *L'Aurore*, July 2, 1971.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Albert du Roy, "Halles : Pavillon haut," *L'Express*, July 12, 1971; Jacques Chambaz, "Suspense aux Halles," *L'Aurore*, July 16, 1971.

⁵⁷ Françoise Espinasse, "Les inconditionnels de Baltard se déchainent," *L'Aurore*, July 1, 1971.

close a deal, shoots his porter when they are lost in the desert and very thirsty. The merchant, suspicious of his employee, had mistakenly thought that his porter had pulled a gun on him when, in fact, he had graciously been offering his employer water from his own bottle. The merchant makes it across the desert by himself, though he has become more ruthless and hardened. When he is eventually brought to trial for the murder, the judge acquits him. The protesters and supporters of the preservation of the pavilions feared that the assassination of Les Halles would go unpunished as well.

From then on, it was this diverse left-leaning coalition that controlled the Les Halles protests. Previously made up of local residents and frustrated students, the movement protesting the government's project at Les Halles grew quickly thanks to increased coverage in the press. The local battle had become national—the political Left saw the issue as a chance to rally their constituents against Pompidou's government. Eighteen groups, including all the major unions and political parties, planned to turned up in front of the Saint-Eustache church that night, July 12, at 6:30 p.m.⁵⁸

Early in the day, 40 protesters from CERES, the militant branch of the Socialist Party, occupied the reception hall of the Paris Municipal Council and began to sing revolutionary songs, including *La Jeune Garde* (*The Young Guard*), *La Carmagnole* (a Piemontese song from the French Revolution), and the *Internationale*, the classic hymn of French socialists and the national anthem of the Soviet Union.⁵⁹ The police quickly removed them and prepared for the larger evening protest. Back on June 24, they had had two squads patrolling the neighborhood, while on this night they had thirteen, armed with shields, handcuffs, batons, tear gas, and goggles.⁶⁰

The banners and chants changed along with the protesters. On July 12, saving the pavilions was no longer the rallying cry. Instead, the protests now promoted building a new Les Halles, but one for Parisians, not for the bank accounts of developers. The Communist Party (PC) unfurled a banner:

Aménagement social, culturel, humain des Halles (Social, cultural, human development of Les Halles)⁶¹

For the Communists, the future redevelopment of the neighborhood was guaranteed and preventing it was a lost cause. They, however, were protesting against private developers looking to turn quick profits, leaving the evicted residents of the neighborhood homeless. The

⁵⁸“APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l’Eglise St-Eustache”, 1971.

⁵⁹“Internal note”, July 12, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l’Eglise St Eustache, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

⁶⁰“Internal document listing squads to control protest”, July 12, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l’Eglise St Eustache, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

⁶¹“Paris—Aux Halles: Plus de deux mille personnes ont manifesté contre le projet d’aménagement du quartier,” *Le Monde*, July 14, 1971.

Communists did not believe in preservationism—they would have accepted a solution of modern, clean, subsidized housing for the evicted in newly constructed buildings in the suburbs.

Others, including the Unified Socialist Party, an alternative to the more ideological Socialist Party, also accepted redevelopment but focused more on the importance of keeping the residents of the neighborhood on site:

Relogement sur place au même prix! Résistons tous aux spéculateurs de la SEMAH. Non aux expulsions! [Relocation on the premises at the same price! Let's all resist the speculators from SEMAH. No to the expulsions!]⁶²

They wanted the future modern housing in the Les Halles neighborhood to remain the homes of the neighborhood's residents with no increased cost to them. For the USP, SEMAH—the public-private partnership created by the government to direct the site's development—was singled-out as the culprit. Others concurred, and shouted against what they perceived to be yet another piece of the city, like the La Villette market, ruined at great public expense for the profit of others:

Non à l'appropriation privée du centre de Paris! [No to private appropriation of the center of Paris!]⁶³

La Villette, les Halles, assez de scandales! [La Villette, les Halles, enough scandals! (imagine it rhyming as it does in French)]⁶⁴

Another chant, belted out as protesters marched past the pavilions, summed up the Left's feelings about Les Halles:

Un forum populaire! [A forum for the people!]⁶⁵

Their message was clear: the forum—the government's future version of Les Halles—should not simply be built to fill the coffers of government officials and real estate developers but should help the soon-to-be dislocated residents of the neighborhood. In the list of demands published by the eighteen groups two days before the protests, they asked only for decent housing for the 1,500 families that would be evicted, not for the preservation of any of their buildings. They believed that there needed to be “integration of all future green spaces in the sector” and that there needed to be a stop to all real estate speculation, but there was no mention of keeping the pavilions.⁶⁶ A modern Les Halles was supported by both Pompidou's Center-Right and all the parties of the Left.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ “Paris et sa région—Manifestation aux Halles contre la démolition des pavillons.”

⁶⁴ Fermigier, “Espoir aux Halles.”

⁶⁵ “Paris—Aux Halles: Plus de deux mille personnes ont manifesté contre le projet d'aménagement du quartier.”

⁶⁶ “APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l'Eglise St-Eustache.”

In just twelve days, from June 30 to July 12, the protests had abandoned their local, preservationist approach. Although some local groups did pass out leaflets, their politics had changed, too. For example, the Defense Committee for the Residents of the Les Halles Area put up posters on July 4 that criticized the “authoritarianism” of the government. Surprisingly, however, the posters called for a “renovation” of the neighborhood, albeit one in which the public had some say in the results, and for “decent housing for everyone (and fair payment to those who would need to be evicted).”⁶⁷ The movement to preserve Les Halles died suddenly. The belly of Paris would be gutted and rebuilt.

Although the police archives are oddly silent about what happened during this period, one of the pamphlets they confiscated at the end of the month gives a more vivid picture of the major protests that came to the public space around Les Halles from July 10 to 12.⁶⁸ Thousands and thousands of people flocked to the pavilions—Parisians, French, and foreigners alike—because “realizing, this time, that Les Halles was finished...they wanted to see [it] one more time.” On the night of the 10th, when workers began to put up a fence around the six pavilions to create a physical construction site, 200 “kamikazes” parked their cars in the middle of traffic to prevent the police from bringing their vehicles within 500 meters of Les Halles. At the same time, members of the Revolutionary Christian Front (FCR) occupied four churches in the surrounding area—Saint Eustache (seen in the photo at the beginning of the chapter looming over Les Halles), Saint Merri, Saint Leu, and Saint German l’Auxerrois—and began ringing the church bells, a veritable call to arms. Unions had requested that their members show up on site and people saw large groups of employees from the Louvre and from BHV and Samaritaine, Paris’s two big department stores in walking distance from Les Halles. The crowds grew and soon enough a group toppled the fence that had been constructed only hours before, and “a gigantic fire of joy” erupted.

During the celebration a Maoist theater group performed a piece they had written about the insurrection at Les Halles on August 26, 1648.⁶⁹ This historic rebellion, now referred to as the Fronde, marked the beginning of what became a five-year fight against the absolutist policies of King Louis XIV. Parisians erected over one thousand barricades in the streets of the city center to fight against the forces of order, which had just arrested the leaders of the opposition against the king. It was only the second time Parisians had put up barricades in the streets. From the perspective of the protesters, who often viewed the history of Paris and France through the lens of the history of revolution and rebellion, the insurrection of 1648 at Les Halles was a pivotal event, not at all an obscure historical battle. The police encircled the area but chose not to enter and risk

⁶⁷ Poster found by the police on July 4, 1971 at 11:30 a.m. on the corner of rue Beaubourg and rue Rambuteau. “APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Tracts Affichés.”

⁶⁸ “Pamphlet ‘Les Halles nous appartiennent’”, July 29, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Tracts Affichés, Archives de la Préfecture de Police. All the following quotes and information comes from the same source.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

a fight with the crowds. The president of Paris's Municipal Council, a Pompidou supporter, made public calls for calm, but they "fell completely flat." This was a crazy, yet not so out of the ordinary, Leftist street protest in post-1968 Paris.

The following day, the construction company returned and put the fence back up.⁷⁰ The building division of the CGT, France's largest union, asked the Leftists to "respect [their] work." The day and night were free from any conflict, but the large protest scheduled for the 12th was only a day away. Protesters organized an impromptu panel discussion on the street with a series of speakers: Orrin Hein, who was on site for negotiations to buy the buildings; a Leftist Sorbonne professor, nicknamed "Professor Sunflower of Advanced Maoism"; the head architect responsible for the redevelopment project; and an old woman who was a florist in the neighborhood. Many people felt empowered by the Stockholm tree affair, which came up frequently in the discussion. A feeling of excitement and hope was in the air.

By the time the sun rose on the twelfth, the day was shaping up to be a nasty one. Overnight, a radical Leftist had gone to the wealthy suburb of Neuilly, just to the west of Paris, and dumped the entire contents of a garbage truck into the garden of Mr. Tomasini, the CEO of G.O.U.A.P.E. (Générale Omnium d'Urbanisation Accélérée par la Percussion Expresse), the firm in charge of preparing the construction site. The workers stopped working that morning—it is unclear whether it was of their own volition or whether they had received orders from either their union or their boss to pause for a day.

Many of the protesters, who were too afraid to be on out the streets due to the significant police presence, were welcomed by local priests in the four local churches, which François Marty, the bishop of Paris, claimed, during a radio address, would remain "places of prayer, reconciliation, and peace."⁷¹ The police filled the streets surrounding Les Halles and attempted to clear away all groups of people. They also hoped to disrupt the protest by using low-flying helicopters for the first time during street fighting in the city, copying the American government's use of helicopters in Washington, D.C. two months earlier during May Day protests against the Vietnam War. It did not work according to plan. Only one helicopter was able to land, and shortly thereafter was crushed by a bulldozer operated by protesters.

At day's end, the police had killed one person, seriously injured two others, trampled an entire American television crew from the CBS network, and rounded up almost two thousand foreigners and even more French citizens. Protesters, responding harshly to the police's forceful tactics, broke into and trashed the Finance Ministry offices in the Louvre, where they burned and destroyed tax records.

Almost instantly, a line of diplomats and ambassadors formed outside the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Quai d'Orsay, demanding an explanation for the arrests of their citizens. The police closed off traffic on the two bridges crossing the Seine near the ministry. And yet in all the major newspapers, even in *L'Humanité*, the Communist paper at the center of the

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

fight against the government's project, news of this intense activity was relegated to a meager two or three line write-up about injured protesters near Les Halles. Although no one raised the charge at the time, it is possible that the government succeeded in censoring the press coverage.

In the coming weeks, the pavilions remained standing, but the protests continued. On July 15, there was still no sign of the demolition crews. The press was kept in the dark and some continued to suspect that the state was trying to negotiate a better deal with Orrin Hein for the sale of the pavilions.⁷² The press began to take less interest in the delays and the protests, too. On July 23, when the office of the Prime Minister, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, released a statement that the demolitions would take place in early August, it received only a short mention in *L'Humanité*. While the beginning of journalists' summer vacation may have left papers without reporters to cover the stories, the press seemed to perceive the preservationists' battle against the pavilions' destruction as finished and unworthy of continued coverage.

Of the people who felt that it was, in fact, worthy of their time and important enough to risk arrest to protest against the destruction of the pavilions and the forced departure of its residents, most, surprisingly, not only lived far away from the neighborhood but did not work in it. It is clear from the police records of individuals taken in for questioning and arrested during the protests in July that the majority of people detained at Les Halles came to the neighborhood from elsewhere in the Paris region. As the stakes of the neighborhood's renovation were highest for residents and shopkeepers who would soon be evicted, one might think that the neighborhood associations, which for years produced almost all of the public outrage against the development of Les Halles, would have come out in even larger numbers during the galvanization of protests during July. Surely some of their members did. But even before the Left co-opted the protests at Les Halles, protesters came from afar. The man who threw a bottle at a police car during the June 24 street party-protest came not from the neighborhood but from Wissous, a small town south of Paris.

All in all, there are no police records of a single neighborhood resident taken in for questioning or arrested during the months of June, July, or August. It is possible that they do not show up in arrest records because the police made a conscious effort to arrest the Leftists whom they feared most. Other residents may have been turned off by the changing rhetoric and political tone of the protests. If we trust that residents' politics matched up with those of the neighborhood groups during the first half of 1971, many of them may have disagreed with the pro-development approach of the Left and felt that they and their homes had been forgotten as a local issue became a national one.

Although we cannot be certain that the opinions of protesters in July matched the statements on the leaflets that they were distributing, it is reasonable to assume that people would

⁷² Chambaz, "Suspense aux Halles."

not come from afar to protest, risking arrest, if they did not believe in the views expounded in the material they handed out. It is a rare opportunity to examine the political viewpoints people had about a place in the city in which they did not live, but about which they felt strongly. In this case, we are not necessarily learning about people who regularly spent time in Les Halles, but about people who felt impelled to protest even though they may not have had much personal stake in the future of Les Halles. Although their names cannot yet be revealed due to French privacy laws, it is still possible to examine the opinions of these individuals who, despite the geographic dispersal of their homes, all cared deeply about the future of Les Halles and about Paris.

On July 12 at 9:55 p.m., the police stopped a nineteen-year-old man a few blocks north of the future site of the Pompidou museum on the corner of rue aux Ours and rue Saint-Martin. They viewed him as a threat because he held a stack of 100 pamphlets titled, “Les Halles Belongs to Us,” and because he possessed “weapons”—a hammer and a set of matches lying in the basket of his moped.⁷³ He had travelled to the city center from his home in Bobigny, a working-class suburb to the north-east of Paris and one of the centers of support for the French Communist Party.⁷⁴ The pamphlets suggested that the state had been infiltrated: “In recent days, the regime has shown its true colors at Les Halles—the takeover by the cops, followed by the takeover by cash.”⁷⁵ He hoped to rally passersby to the big firefighters’ ball at Les Halles on the following night, where they could show their support by joining his group, the Action Group for the Liberation of the Environment.⁷⁶ “Be ready to counter [the state and the police] by our presence on demolition day [July 15],” he warned his readers.⁷⁷ This Bobigny resident seemed to view the development project at Les Halles as the epitome of corrupt capitalism and the work of a state and police force that were hostile to everyday people.

Earlier during the protests on July 2, the police took a 22-year-old student and his 24-year-old wife, an office worker, in for questioning.⁷⁸ The couple was stopped near Les Halles, just like the man from Bobigny, for passing out leaflets, in which the most incendiary statement was a call for a “peaceful assembly” against the development of Les Halles at an unknown date. While the husband had been born in Paris and his wife in Montreuil, a suburb just beyond Paris’s

⁷³ “Internal police telegram, Leaflet holder”, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Notes d’Informations/Renseignements Locaux, Archives de la Préfecture de Police; “Letter from R. Jaubert, police chief of 5th District, to the Directeur Général of the Police”, July 12, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l’Eglise St Eustache, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

⁷⁴ See Tyler Stovall, *The Rise of the Paris Red Belt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) for a history of the development of Bobigny in the first half of the twentieth century and how its population came to support the PCF.

⁷⁵ “Leaflet holder, APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Notes d’Informations/Renseignements Locaux.”

⁷⁶ Known in French as the *bal des sapeurs pompiers*, these huge parties are put on in firehouses throughout the city to raise money for the fire companies on the nights of July 13 and 14. It is a tradition that continues to this day.

⁷⁷ “Leaflet holder, APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Notes d’Informations/Renseignements Locaux.”

⁷⁸ “Internal police file”, July 2, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Tracts Affichés, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

eastern border, they lived in Noisy-le-Sec, the town directly south of Bobigny, where the PCF also had a strong presence. It is fitting that the police took them in, because the couple wanted to speak with them. Their leaflet, prepared by the Group for the Defense of Places and of Individual and Collective Liberties, was addressed to “policiers, gendarmes mobiles, [and] CRS” (the three different types of police units—municipal police, mobile units of the national police, and national riot police). It stated:

You are our fellow citizens and contemporaries.

YOU ARE THEREFORE ALSO CONCERNED by what we think of you, [and] of what French people in general think of our civilization and our individual and collective initiatives. Look, for example, at what the largest American daily has written:

‘The Fifth Republic is actively working to destroy Paris... we might expect vandalism like this in New York, but not in Paris... We assumed that the French were civilized.’ (New York Times, June 30).

Known around the world, the Les Halles neighborhood lies at the heart of Paris, and is a place of exchange and animation for EVERYONE. We call for a peaceful assembly to express the desire of Parisians to preserve and to better this neighborhood, which shows itself every day to be a great center for people to meet and relax.⁷⁹

The couple believed that if the police and the leaders of France would take a real look at the project they were defending, they would recognize that it was vandalism. If it was so clear to *The New York Times*, it had to be clear to Parisians, whether they be policemen or protesters. Again, like the man from Bobigny, the couple felt compelled to travel all the way to the city center to have someone listen to them. They seemed to care about the Les Halles neighborhood, which for them was the great place for social interaction in Paris, even if it was far from their home. Whether they would protest about a similar project in Noisy-le-Sec is unclear, but Les Halles was special to them and they feared that it would lose its character if the government’s project was allowed to continue. The police did not comment on the flier or on the questioning of the couple.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

The protestor from Bobigny lived in the Cité de l'Étoile, a state-built housing project that was constructed between 1956 and 1962. At the time, it was viewed as a triumph of working-class public housing, not as the failure it is seen as today.⁸⁰ The modern amenities found in these apartments—hot water, gas heat, and private toilets and showers—were such a significant upgrade from previous housing for many residents that their construction was a great way for the PCF and other left-wing parties to obtain votes from the citizens. This was the type of public, subsidized housing—known as HLM, or, literally, “Housing at Reasonable Rents”—that the government planned to offer to the displaced Les Halles residents. They would be built on the edge of the city or in suburbs all around the city, like Bobigny, to help unclog the city center.

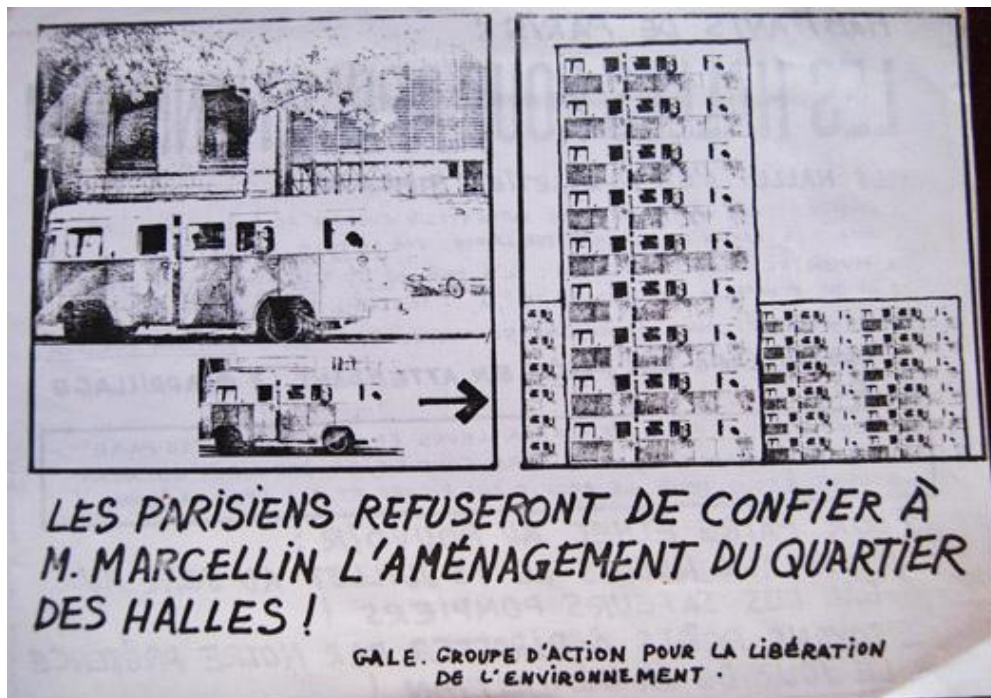


Figure 4. Back side of leaflet from GALE, the Groupe d'Action pour la Libération de l'Environnement. APP, Démolition des Halles, Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l'Eglise St Eustache.

The flier that this Bobigny resident distributed stated that Les Halles “was in the process of creating an authentic popular culture, in a popular type of architecture, open to the street, to the city, and to life.”⁸¹ While we do not know what this resident thought of his own city or, more specifically, his apartment building, we do know that both resemble the archetypal undesirable modern city depicted in the image on the backside of his flyer (Figure 4). “The Parisians will refuse to entrust Mr. Marcellin [one of the leaders of the SEMAH development project] with the development of the Les Halles neighborhood.” Why? The image reveals the answer—the development project will evict people, put them in buses (as pictured on the left), which will then

⁸⁰ See “Atlas du Patrimoine de la Seine-Saint-Denis, Cité de l'Étoile – Bobigny”, n.d., http://www.atlas-patrimoine93.fr/pg-html/bases_doc/inventaire/fiche.php?idfic=008inv004; “Leaflet holder, APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Notes d'Informations/Renseignements Locaux.”

⁸¹ “Report of the questioning of Bobigny resident”, July 12, 1971, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, 12 Juillet 1971: Manifestation devant l'Eglise St Eustache, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

drop them off at their new homes in the lifeless, Kafka-esque modern blocks on the right. This resident of Bobigny, who lived in a building like the ones shown in Figure 4, could not have ignored that his own home's architecture was depicted on his flyers as the archetypal undesirable place to live in the Paris region. Even though this man may have enjoyed the improved residential amenities of his modern apartment building, he had come to Les Halles to protest against the destruction of a neighborhood filled with buildings centuries older, which were more inadequately equipped than his own. He certainly believed that preserving this historic neighborhood's architecture, far from his own home, was an issue for which it was worth fighting.

The bottle-throwing Wissous resident lived in a small house on the edge of town.⁸² Until 1960, Wissous, a small town seven miles south of Paris with a population of a few thousand residents, was an isolated place.⁸³ It had no access to public transport to bring its residents to Paris, even though it was so close to the city. Life in the town was local and, even for its most cosmopolitan residents, tied only to other small towns located within a radius of a few miles.⁸⁴ Then, in one fell swoop, it became famous across France for being at the center—literally—of the Paris region's massive infrastructure development of the 1960s. The government surrounded it with the massive A6 highway, connecting Paris and Lyon, on its western edge (opened in 1960), Orly Airport directly to its east and south (opened in 1961), and Rungis, the future site of Les Halles, to its north (opened in part in 1969). Wissous still did not receive public transportation for years to come and, in some ways, was left to rot, without any public investment, squeezed in between all of this expensive, modern development.⁸⁵

While we do not know what this livery driver thought of his home town or of Paris, we do know that he had firsthand experience with the French government's pro-growth development projects and their social effects. His small home, with a small garden in front, lay just over 300 feet from the massive overpass of the A6, and he without a doubt heard the constant drone of passing cars and trucks and the constant roar of airplane engines whenever he was home. Whether this played any role in his violence against the police at Les Halles on June 24, it is not possible to know conclusively. But it is clear that he knew what modernization and development could do to a town or to a neighborhood, and how drastically and how quickly change could come to a place.

Later in the month, on July 29 at 7:00 p.m. on the piece of rue Rambuteau sandwiched between the Saint-Eustache Church and the pavilions, the police confiscated 1,500 part-typed, part-handwritten multi-page pamphlets from unknown individuals of yet another group, the Enthusiasm Committee for the Defense of Residents of Les Halles and the Recovery of the

⁸² "Manifestations Importantes, APP, Démolition des Halles—Main Courante."

⁸³ For more on the transformation of Wissous, see the anthropological study Robert T. Anderson, *Bus Stop for Paris: The Transformation of a French Village* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965).

⁸⁴ Anderson, *Bus Stop for Paris*.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Pavilions.⁸⁶ It seems to be a pastiche, a quickly thrown-together compilation of different people's writings and drawings, some professional, others homemade. The group's ideology veered away from the official line of the July 12 protests, back toward the beliefs and demands of the earlier neighborhood association groups'. For its writers, the architecture of the pavilions was the crucial element to the functioning of the neighborhood. For the pamphlet's writers, the pavilions were not simply beautiful historic buildings worth preserving; they were *the* central space of the neighborhood, even of the entire city center:

[The neighborhood] lived with vegetables and meat for one hundred years and more importantly, it just proved that it can live with theater, exhibitions, the *fête foraine*, the circus, an entire range of activities that one could no longer find in Paris, which one would have dreamed of finding directly in its center. These multi-purpose umbrellas—Baltard's pavilions and their magnificent basements—despite all the prohibitions and obstructions that have been imposed upon them, have appeared irreplaceable: they have recreated the true *raison d'être* of the city center, the place of all types of exchanges, the place of life, freedom, and spontaneity, recovered by the immediate contact between the neighborhood and the street, without barriers, without technocratic planning...⁸⁷

The implications of this text are very significant, as it was far from the standard political view that accepted the renovation of the neighborhood and the destruction of the pavilions. First and foremost, it celebrates urban life and the public spaces that promote spontaneous encounters and mixing among people. Unlike the residents of the neighborhood and the Left, it does not view the stakes of the Les Halles renovation simply in terms of housing and of profiteering by technocrats. From this viewpoint, it was the people of Paris, not the residents of the neighborhood, who had the most to lose from the destruction of the pavilions. The future health of the entire city was at stake, because the city's most important public space and meeting point was at risk of disappearing.

Beyond that, the pamphlet's writers believed that the pavilions themselves, as architectural structures, *produced* the animation and excitement in the Les Halles neighborhood. This argument is the strongest and most direct type of defense for preservationism. If the pavilions were destroyed, the neighborhood would lose its *raison d'être* and therefore the life within it. The pavilions alone—whether they be filled with circuses, paintings, or meat—guaranteed the existence of Les Halles' vibrant, spontaneous neighborhood life. Architecture, according to this approach, determined the life and culture in its surrounding area, and therefore it was crucial to make sure to preserve structures that created the city's most important places of exchange.

This belief in the power, importance, and beauty of the pavilions was prevalent throughout Paris in the summer of 1971 and in the nostalgic years to follow, despite the Left's pro-development viewpoint. Parisians loved the neighborhood and its architecture and often conflated the two. Practically speaking, Parisians who thought that by keeping the pavilions they

⁸⁶ "APP, Démolition des Halles—Manifestations Diverses, Tracts Affichés."

⁸⁷ Ibid.

could keep the neighborhood they loved were fooling themselves. The transfer of the markets to Rungis had already initiated a vast transformation of the neighborhood and, although the extent is difficult to document, of the entire city center. Even if Baltard's pavilions had remained standing, the removal of the markets—the core of the center of Paris's economy—made it impossible to bring back the vibrant life at all hours of the day and night that people had found so appealing about the neighborhood. Museum exhibitions, concerts, and circuses a few nights per week in the pavilions would not keep bars open at three in the morning on a Monday night when there was no longer any reason for people to remain up and about.

This moment, however, made Parisians realize that their city was disappearing right before their very eyes. Much of that transformation had already begun, but as economic and demographic changes tend to become visible only gradually, most Parisians had not recognized that they firmly supported the preservation of their city center. Changes to architecture, especially exterior ones, however, expose themselves directly to the public. They therefore often come to represent other more profound and complex urban transformations. The impending destruction of the Baltard pavilions came not only to symbolize the disappearance, feared or real, of Paris's physical appearance, but also its economy, life, and culture. People feared that the impending growth of soulless new buildings, like those depicted in the flyer above (Figure 4), would empty the city of its life and culture. Architecture acted as the visible representation of urban change, as seen in this passage by André Fermigier, a journalist for *Le Nouvel Observateur*:

There was a Paris to which everyone was attached and around which could have been born another city: human, welcoming, and acceptable according to the social and urban plans for the city. The least we can say is that modern Paris, the Paris of the second half of the twentieth century was made a mess of, pathetically bungled: look at Maine-Montparnasse [the train station], the tower of the Halle aux Vins, the [Place d']Italie sector, the pathetic Front de Seine of the 15th arrondissement. And there are even better ones, which you will see tomorrow: the Montparnasse Tower, that of the Porte Maillot, of the hotel on the Quai Kennedy (next to the Maison de la Radio), without speaking of what is being prepared at the Gare d'Orsay and on the site of the Bon Marché department store. Paris resembles more and more a capital of an underdeveloped country spiked with capitalist symbols and cheap counterfeits of an architecture that has meaning in New York but here is one of lies.⁸⁸

Paris's modern architecture, to Fermigier, removed what made the city unique, what made it Paris. These buildings seemed to be spreading like weeds, quickly sprouting up all over the city. Some were bigger than others—the Montparnasse Tower being the best example—but it was the accumulation that was worrisome. The protests against the destruction of Les Halles had not calmed these people's fears, as they had little faith in Pompidou's government. Some continued to foresee a grim future for Paris and life within it:

Baltard's pavilions made everyone feel younger. The new constructions will fossilize us all in the same ice age, one of sterilized automatism. When our children are twenty years old, they will go

⁸⁸ Fermigier, "Qui a vendu Les Halles ?".

to see Monsieur Pompidou soaking in formaldehyde in the Museum of the Twentieth Century, there where their parents, sitting on their asses, had once been watching an unnamed acting company perform an unscripted play to try to show the misery of the past residents of the neighborhood who did not even have enough money to be rehoused in the soulless H.L.M. [projects] on the city's outskirts.⁸⁹

This writer may have been concocting a dubious future for Paris in this passage, but the fundamental views he or she expresses were becoming commonly held. The majority of the population had begun to believe that a France focused only on science, development, and growth would empty the country of human interaction and beauty. They had also begun to ponder that the protests of the 1960s and 1970s against this France had, in fact, been too idealistic, distant, and self-congratulatory to bring about any lasting change.

These views, in fact, fueled a new approach to urban politics that made the errors of the 1950s through the 1970s the starting point of its approach to the city. The desire to modernize, rebuild, and improve Paris continued to hold sway in all levels of government and industry, but from this point on, these heavy-handed projects in the city center would have to contend with a more vocal and politically more developed opposition that embraced preservation and feared a future, modernized city. Paris's urban development would take on a very different character in the years to come.

Although the protests might have come too late, preservation, as an idea, had become more mainstream as a result of this quest to prevent the government from transforming Les Halles. De Charbonnière later wrote that after the decision had been made to move the wholesale markets to the suburbs in the early 1960s, "we were only a handful worrying about the future fate of the Les Halles neighborhood [and] rare were those who agreed to listen to us."⁹⁰ Ten years later, he claimed victory for preservationism:

Our success in shaping public opinion is near complete. No one today would dare to deny the architectural interest in Paris's center. No one would still defend that it is necessary to start from scratch and raze such a group of houses from the classical period, and nearly no one argues against the merit of Napoleon III and Baltard's Les Halles.⁹¹

Paris's future development during the coming decades would take place in an environment where preservation was the norm, where older buildings would be more desirable than new ones. While these visions of the city were shifting, the city center first had to cope with the damage wrought on its fabric and economy by the closure of many of its manufacturing companies and smaller retail businesses, as well as the loss of its great marketplace.

⁸⁹ "Le ventre de Paris manifeste," *Esprit*, September 1971.

⁹⁰ de Charbonnières, "Monter la garde aux Halles ?".

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4

Passages

The Rise of Preservationism and the Remaking of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1974-1998

In less than a century, advances in science, industrial development, and demographic expansion have shattered the structure of our cities. As the most important French city, Paris, in a state of total anarchy, suffers from transformations that disfigure it, render the existence of its residents inhumane and compromise its future.¹

L'Association pour la sauvegarde et la mise en valeur du Paris historique, 1968
(The Association for the Protection and Development of Historic Paris)

As the dust settled from the destruction of the pavilions that were once Les Halles, the movement to preserve and to protect much of Paris's architectural past began to grow and to push its agenda successfully. The public was in favor. The city and nation, together, looked backwards for inspiration for the first time since World War II, both wary of what Paris could resemble in the future. More frequently than ever before, the government bestowed *monument historique* (protected monument) status upon buildings, structures, and other sites throughout Paris, making it legally difficult for owners—public and private—to modify or to demolish them. Although the government continued to experiment with controversial, modern structures in the 1970s and 1980s, almost all of them remained distant from the city center. A truce lay over the land.

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the French centrist president from 1974 to 1981 who pushed a protectionist agenda, moved quickly after his election to set new, restricted standards for urban and economic development in the Paris city center. In 1975, he ended Pompidou's controversial plan to build a highway along the Left Bank, which would have caused massive demolitions in one of the most scenic and visited parts of Paris.² One week later, his government modified previous plans to build office buildings and a shopping center at Les Halles, offering a new version with reduced development and two more acres of parks, a small "green space gesture."³ One scholar wrote that "Giscard was able to seize on a growing, but inchoate, dissatisfaction with the dramatically changing physical and social environment of the new Paris."⁴ Giscard d'Estaing recognized that France had pushed too hard to modernize its economy and society since the end

¹ "Sauvegarde et mise en valeur du Paris historique, numéro spécial juin 1968" (Association pour la sauvegarde et la mise en valeur du Paris historique, 1968), 14.

² See Julia Trilling, "Environmental Policy and Metropolitan Growth Land-use Planning in the Paris Region Since World War II" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1981), 6.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

of World War II.⁵ In his own words, he tried to promote “a new [political] grammar, permitting better expression of the needs and preferences of a population that never manages to be heard and is suffocated by concrete, paperwork, and an inextricable circuit of decision-making.”⁶

After the intense criticism of the construction of the 59-story Tour Montparnasse and the destruction of Les Halles, modern architecture was kept outside of the city center except for a handful of government-built monumental structures. These projects were controversial from the moment they were revealed to the public until years after they were completed. The national modern art museum, the Centre Georges Pompidou, an imposing structure with its radical colors and exposed piping, continued to cause both excitement and anger among visitors after it opened on the edge of the Marais in 1977. Seven years later, on January 24, 1984, Mitterrand’s government proclaimed I.M. Pei, a Chinese architect, the winner of the design competition for the new entrance of the Louvre museum. When the public learned that a glass pyramid would be built in the courtyard of not only the most visited museum in the country but also the most historically significant government building in Paris, the media erupted in mass condemnation.⁷ This continued unabated until long after the inauguration of the pyramid in March 1988. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, the country had become warier than ever about contemporary architectural additions to the city center of Paris. Public opinion had turned toward preservation, not destruction or even alteration.

The protection of architectural monuments, however, was only a small part of a larger, pre-existing project to develop Paris’s center with attention to keeping its visual character intact. As André Malraux, the Minister of Culture, stated in a speech to the Assemblée Nationale in 1962, the nations of the world had “discovered that the soul of [their] past is not made of only masterpieces and that, in architecture, an isolated masterpiece risks becoming a dead masterpiece” if left standing alone without context.⁸ Starting in the 1960s, it also became a priority to keep Paris’s less important buildings protected from changes, at least from the outside. The government started to force the owners of buildings in designated historic neighborhoods in cities across France to clean their buildings’ façades regularly. With new legislation passed in 1967, the state also received increased powers to set zoning laws in all areas of cities, including determining building height limitations, façade alignment, and other modifications to existing structures. Other policies gave building owners tax incentives to renovate the interiors of their buildings. As the 1970s progressed, Paris’s buildings were looking cleaner from their outside and well equipped from the inside, thanks to government control and a mix of public and private financing.

⁵ See Chapter 9, “La Nouvelle Croissance” in Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, *Démocratie française* (Paris: Fayard, 1976), 127–135.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 130–131.

⁷ See Ariane Chemin, “La bataille de la pyramide,” *Le Monde*, August 22, 2012.

⁸ André Malraux, “Présentation du projet de loi complétant la législation sur la protection du patrimoine historique et esthétique de la France et tendant à faciliter la restauration,” *Journal officiel des débats de l’Assemblée Nationale* 67 (July 24, 1962): 2775–2780.

Although this grand project for restoring, improving, and beautifying streets and their buildings in Paris's city center was not anti-urban in an architectural sense—it did not seek to destroy the fabric of the city as planners had desired in the 1950s and 1960s—it was suburban in its conception of public space. The urban vision that defined this project viewed the city as best when clean, quiet, and civilized, a place that had all of the underpinnings of the Main Street of an American town with slightly more people on its streets. It was a vision that ended up growing far beyond the preservation movement to influence not only the government's policies, but also the tastes and desires of many Parisians.

During this period, however, the government chose to redevelop many areas of the city with what it saw as less valuable architecture. Although most parts of the 1st through 10th arrondissements were left untouched, the outer arrondissements, except for certain protected areas like Montmartre in the 18th and the Butte-aux-Cailles in the 13th, were considered fair game for destruction and redevelopment, just as they had been in the 1950s and 1960s. These areas often lost their street layout and dense three-to-six story buildings with shops on the ground floor in favor of high-rise housing, large open spaces, and ground floors occupied by state-run schools, day care centers, clinics, and swimming pools. In many ways, the government, through these rebuilding policies, defined the future city center of Paris. The areas left as they were remained urban and therefore felt like the center of Paris, while the areas the government redeveloped looked like recently constructed suburbs across France and around the world.

In 1977, finally taking their fate into their own hands, Parisians went to the polls to elect their first mayor in over one hundred years. By voting and lobbying the Hôtel de Ville and the newly instituted mayors of individual arrondissements, residents' opinions on urban issues, especially those related to city planning and street life, began to exert a direct influence on urban policy. Protests were no longer the main method for Parisians to express discontent with local issues. Over the course of the 1980s, the state gave more and more power to local government in Paris, granting residents—the voters—and their desires increased influence over how their neighborhoods and their public spaces would be modified and regulated. This shift in political power would prove to be one of the defining moments in the history of neighborhoods and public space in Paris. Residents, whether they desired more green space and day care centers in some areas or untouched early-nineteenth-century buildings on narrow, winding streets in others, were going to be heard and have the municipal government respond to their needs.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis, however, remained distant from the application of this vision of a new Paris from the 1970s through the 1990s. It took until after the turn of the century for the preservation movement to truly arrive at its doorstep. Only a handful of buildings had received protected status beforehand. The neighborhood had not been considered a priority zone for development by the city, as many important places deserved restoration before a relatively unimportant manufacturing district where real estate developers were not going to profit handsomely. It was not until the late 1990s that residents and the Mairie, or city hall, of the 10th arrondissement made a concerted effort to influence the development of their neighborhood's

streets. Beforehand, the Mairie had focused its attention on the eastern part of the arrondissement surrounding the Canal Saint-Martin and closer to the edges of the 11th and 19th.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis's buildings were left alone by the government and urban planners. Before 2000, walking down the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, one would have thus continued to see a busy, colorful market street, lined with old buildings, and busy with shoppers, café-goers, and other pedestrians. The buildings had cleaner façades than in 1960, the people on the street looked different, and some shops had changed, but overall, the public space of the neighborhood had not been significantly altered.

Outside of the effects of the disappearance of Les Halles, the significant transformations to the Faubourg Saint-Denis during this period were mainly due to economic and demographic changes that were not specific to Paris. The large manufacturing plants and businesses like those in city centers around the world had begun their decline in the 1960s that culminated in the 1980s. Not only were these factories frequently functioning with outdated technology, but also they were located in areas inconvenient for distribution. If a business wanted to sell to a market outside of the Paris city center, it was much more beneficial to be located near newly built airports or highways. Exacerbating these difficulties, France had begun to import many of these goods less expensively from abroad, whether it be from other parts of Europe or Asia. These cheaper products made it much harder for French producers to stay in business. The Faubourg Saint-Denis was not immune to these fundamental changes to the manufacturing economy. The crystal, printing, and clothing industries were all dealt significant blows resulting in many closures over the course of the 1970s and the 1980s.

At the same time, many retail businesses in food, clothing, or crystal sales also started closing down by the late-1970s and early-1980s. This was due to another fundamental economic transformation, this time tied to changes to the retail industry as a whole. Narrow market streets were beginning to lose their attraction to Parisian shoppers. The growth of shopping malls, department stores, and supermarkets began to hurt the bottom line of smaller businesses in food and clothing sales. These new businesses, operating in parts of Paris and its suburbs with bigger retail spaces and parking for customers and delivery trucks, often sold goods at lower prices and were located in more accessible and desirable places for Parisians to do their shopping. Many of the businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis could not compete.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis had also acquired a bad reputation. By the late 1980s, it had become infamous for a visible, out-in-the-open drug trade. The Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station, many of the neighborhood's streets, the courtyards of its buildings, and, most notoriously, its *passages*, became known as centers for delinquency and crime. It did not help its image that many new immigrants had moved to the neighborhood in the late-1970s and early-1980s. While the neighborhood's streets remained busy during the daytime, this reputation was a significant change from its status in the 1960s, when it was viewed more as a busy manufacturing center with only a few small vices, such as its street prostitution.

Historians also refer to this period as a dark age for the Les Halles neighborhood.⁹ After such a politicized and romanticized destruction of the pavilions, it is not surprising that scholars have assumed that afterwards the neighborhood contained little of merit. Louis Chevalier summed up the feelings that influenced many in the conclusion to his 1977 vitriol against the destruction of old Paris by powerful technocrats, titled *The Assassination of Paris*. He wrote, “With Les Halles gone, Paris is gone... Les Halles was les Halles; and les Halles was Paris.”¹⁰ The huge hole—*le grand trou*—left in its place was a daily reminder of the loss both Paris and the neighborhood had suffered.

However, while this was a challenging moment for the city center of Paris, it was also a moment of revitalization and, in many cases, continuity. In the Faubourg Saint-Denis, despite a moment of drastic economic change with significant effects on the city center of Paris, people’s older habits and the businesses they supported continued to thrive. When they did not, new businesses—both in manufacturing and in retail—quickly replaced them, sometimes in the same line of work. Many businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis that worked in industries on the decline in city centers continued to be successful while some of their competitors went out of business (these included small independent food shops such as butchers and grocery stores, clothing manufacturing companies, crystal and porcelain stores, and even a public bathhouse). Paris had in its favor something many other post-industrial cities did not: a flexible workforce ready to step in and make use of the affordable and conveniently located spaces available in the city center.

Even before the last of the pavilions fell in 1973, the area surrounding the perimeter of Les Halles blossomed as a new center for fashion design entrepreneurs and art galleries, and found itself in constant flux—excitingly so, as some remember—through the 1980s. Although the transformation of the Faubourg Saint-Denis was not as drastic, it, too, retained a vibrant retail sector, welcoming many immigrants from Greece, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Turkey, among other places, to its businesses, as owners, workers, and customers. Much of its industry as well, especially its smaller clothing manufacturing workshops, was taken over by new businesses run by these immigrants and French newcomers to the neighborhood.

For both Les Halles and the Faubourg Saint-Denis, old and new businesses alike made use of the old network of retail and commercial spaces available in these neighborhoods. It was not simply the small size and low cost of many of these spaces, but their variety, proximity to each other, and the ease of socializing they granted their users that made these spaces so popular and loved. It is to the study of these people and their spaces, as well as to the growing desire to clean, preserve, and quiet these spaces, that this chapter is devoted.

⁹ See, for example, the most frequently cited English-language book on the topic, Norma Evenson, *Paris: a Century of Change, 1878-1978* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

¹⁰ Louis Chevalier, *The Assassination of Paris* (University Of Chicago Press, 1994), 246.

For the first time, by the 1970s, all parties involved in the urban planning and development of Paris's center agreed that its future would involve a combination of the old and new. The ideal street would be filled with older buildings fronted by clean façades, behind which would lie renovated interiors. Paris would retain its old-fashioned charm from the street but it would be modern, well equipped, and clean as well, a noticeable upgrade from its recent past.

André Malraux stated this project clearly in a speech to the Assemblée Nationale on July 23, 1962. Speaking to the parliament regarding a proposed law for the protection of *patrimoine historique* in France, Malraux made it clear that preserving the aesthetic of a neighborhood as it appeared from the street was crucial:

As on most of the banks [of the Seine], beyond Notre Dame, there appear no illustrious monuments, their homes have value only as part of the group to which they belong. They are the privileged settings of a dream that Paris bestowed upon the world, and we want to protect these settings as we do our monuments. It is relatively easy. Private initiative is currently transforming modest apartments along the old banks into luxury apartments. Just in the nick of time, because the intact façade of an old house is a work of art in its own right, but the intact interior of the same house belongs in a museum or in a slum, and more often in a slum than in a museum.¹¹

For Malraux and later for the government, according to the policies that the 1962 law would create, protection extended only to a building's façade. Interiors could be changed as the owner saw fit.

The law innovated by creating new incentives for property owners to restore their buildings' exteriors.¹² It offered tax breaks and significant economic incentives to owners who invested in their properties while repairing their exteriors. As investment in a property's interior—constructing additions, changing floor plans, or adding electricity, water, central heating, or an elevator, for example—would have been significant, it gave owners the right to deduct these expenses from their tax returns. While it did protect renters who lived or ran businesses in these buildings by giving them the right to return to a building after renovations were completed, the owner had the right to increase rents in the aftermath.¹³

The complex built during the 1970s at 6 rue des Haudriettes in the 3rd arrondissement on the edge of the Marais is a perfect example of the type of development that resulted from this legislation. Visible from the street is a seventeenth-century façade, behind which lie a group of modern buildings containing over one hundred apartments. Even the building whose façade is visible from the street has no trace of its seventeenth-century origins on the inside. In this case, the Malraux Law gave the building's owners the necessary incentive to clean off the front of the building and construct a large number of modern apartments behind it. This was a powerful law

¹¹ Malraux, "Présentation du projet de loi complétant la législation sur la protection du patrimoine historique et esthétique de la France et tendant à faciliter la restauration."

¹² "Loi no. 62-903 du 4 août 1962," *Journal officiel de la République Française* (August 7, 1962): 7813–7815.

¹³ See Articles 6 through 9, *Ibid.*, 7814.

in that it mobilized business owners to make investments to modernize Paris in the name of preservation.

Although this law was applicable only in areas deemed *secteurs sauvegardés*, or protected sectors, its method and approach to preservation became the standard in Paris in future decades. Only two neighborhoods in Paris ever received this status—the Marais (in 1964) and part of the 7th arrondissement (in 1972), each containing many old mansions and buildings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The protection of these neighborhoods, while pushed by Malraux and others in the French state, developed due to assiduous, unrelenting work by community organizations such as the *L'Association pour la sauvegarde et la mise en valeur du Paris historique* (The Association for the Protection and Development of Historic Paris), quoted at the beginning of the chapter. Groups like this one, specifically focused on protecting seventeenth- and eighteenth-century historic buildings in the Marais, used all their power, as Jane Jacobs had in New York, to prevent the state from destroying the city's architectural heritage. While their positions related to development in the city center of Paris were against the political status quo at that time, by the 1990s they would become the norm.

The programs to preserve individual *monuments historiques*, which grew in numbers in Paris after the 1960s, worked similarly to maintain and restore the city's historic architecture. They gave building owners similar types of tax incentives to repair their buildings, though the restrictions on *monuments historiques* were greater, as their interiors were also of historical importance. These structures were considered to be of the highest possible architectural value and therefore all of their components needed to be preserved during a renovation. Owners did not have the right to make significant changes to the interiors of these buildings. While they would generally receive approval to add heating, water, and electricity, knocking down walls, adding floors above or below ground, and other more substantial modifications were often rejected.

All of these changes, like those to a building in a *secteur sauvegardé*, had to be approved by an *architecte des bâtiments de France*, a state-appointed architect who had been trained to work on *monuments historiques*. This elite group of architects was a special corps formed in 1946 specifically to manage the nation's architectural patrimony and acted as a check on unrestrained development. Their work was often looked down upon by developers and building owners because they worked hard to prevent the transformations that generally brought owners profits on their real estate investments. Owning and renovating a *monument historique* was a collaborative, time-intensive, and costly process. In the 1970s, as the number of buildings in Paris with this status increased (see Figure 1), building preservation began to play a more significant role in the politics of neighborhoods and urban planning.

The 1970s and the 1980s were the golden era of building preservation in Paris, with almost eight hundred buildings receiving some form of protected status. Protecting the architectural past of the city had become an important urban strategy for the government. Although most of the city's well-known monuments had been protected before World War II,

preservationists in that area had considered nineteenth- and twentieth-century architecture too recent to protect.¹⁴ In the 1920s, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architecture was viewed as worthy of protection, and the government actively elevated structures around the city to *monument historique* status (see Figure 1). In the three decades to follow, few structures were added to the list of protected buildings.

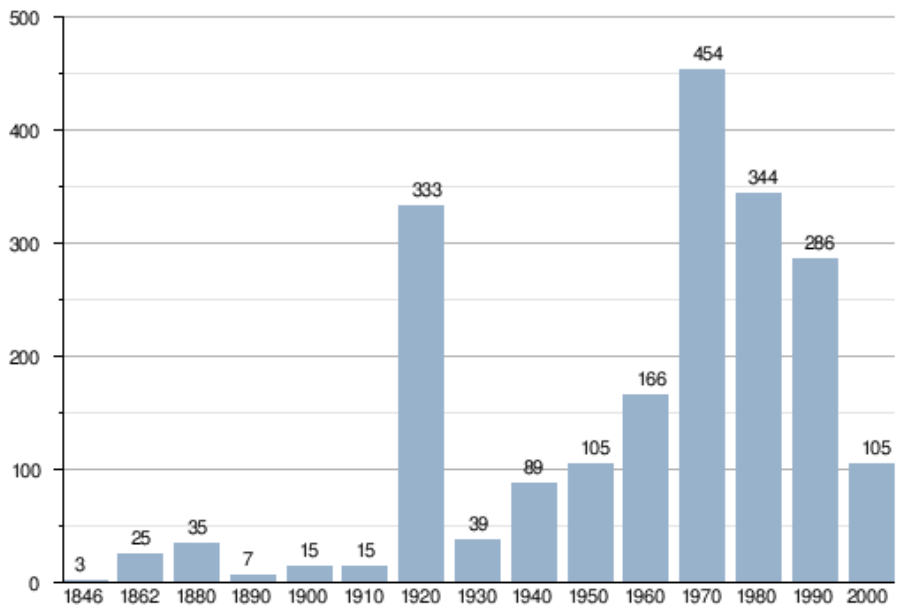


Figure 1. Graph of the number of *monuments historiques* created in Paris, by decade.¹⁵

By the 1960s, preservationists also began to consider nineteenth- and twentieth-century structures—the majority of the city’s buildings—as worthy of protection. The Eiffel Tower, built for the Exposition Universelle of 1889 and the first iron structure to be protected in Paris, received its *monument historique* status in 1964. As the 1970s progressed, the majority of the structures that received this status had been built in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A neighborhood benefited from *monuments historiques* in its vicinity, not only for the added distinction they brought a street, but also because their presence protected many other buildings in a neighborhood through a law referred to as *covisibilité*.

The notion of *covisibilité*, part of the *monument historique* legislation, protected all buildings that had a direct line of sight to any *monument historique* and could also be seen from the *monument historique*. It acted as another means of controlling modern development in older neighborhoods. If one could see just one window of a *monument historique* from the top floor of

¹⁴ For more on the rise of preservationism in Paris since the end of the nineteenth century, see Ruth Fiori, *L’invention du vieux Paris: Naissance d’une conscience patrimoniale dans la capitale* (Paris: Mardaga, 2012).

¹⁵ *Graph of the Number of Monuments Historiques Created in Paris, by Decade.*, n.d., <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/fr/timeline/c7bddc0a74c964d27491f992d70f9bab.png>.

a non-descript twentieth-century building three blocks away, an *architecte des bâtiments de France* would have to approve any change to the exterior of that building. This legislation expanded on Malraux's idea of preserving the built environment around important buildings. In many historic parts of Paris, *covisibilité* protected entire neighborhoods from modification to their exteriors.

The French state gave these powers of oversight, among others, to regional, not municipal, governments in its *Loi d'orientation foncière* of December 30, 1967.¹⁶ Groups of municipalities, individual *départements*, or groups of *départements* could now work together to write and enact regionally-minded city plans (called *Schémas directeurs*) and accompanying documents (*Plans d'occupation des sols*) that specified limitations on building height, façade alignment, and the distances between buildings and of setbacks from the street. While these powers were often used to protect older structures and green space—forests, parks, and riverbanks, among others—from destruction, these plans also gave the jurisdictions that applied them the legal capabilities to demolish and reconstruct streets and neighborhoods. In the case of Paris, the 1967 law gave the District de la Région de Paris, a successor to the Préfecture de Paris, whose president (or *Délégué général*) was appointed by the French president, the right to create and implement these plans. Regional governments jumped at the opportunity to shape development in their jurisdiction. By 1975, plans had already been drawn up to set regulations over more than a quarter of French territory in which over two-thirds of the national population lived.¹⁷

This was just the beginning of protectionist legislation. As the years went by, continuing well into the 21st century, Paris would become subject to vast numbers of new laws from the central, regional, and municipal governments, each creating new jurisdictions, layers of bureaucracy, and new offices to monitor changes to buildings. By 2012, according to Suzanne Doucet, the director of the research center at the Service Territorial de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine de Paris, almost approximately 90 percent of buildings in Paris had become subject to a review by an *architecte des bâtiments de France* for any desired change by their owners.¹⁸

The future of the built environment and neighborhoods in Paris drastically changed on March 25, 1977 when, as previously mentioned, Paris elected its first mayor since 1871. In 1975,

¹⁶ See the Ministre de l'Équipement's ode to the law in the foreword of Robert Galley, *POS-SDAU, Juillet 1975 : État des schémas directeurs d'aménagement et d'urbanisme et des plans d'occupation des sols* (Paris: Ministère de l'Équipement, 1976), 7. For the law, see "Loi d'orientation foncière, no. 67-1253 du 30 décembre 1967," *Journal officiel de la République Française* (January 3, 1968): 3–13.

¹⁷ Galley, *POS-SDAU, Juillet 1975 : État des schémas directeurs d'aménagement et d'urbanisme et des plans d'occupation des sols*, 10.

¹⁸ Suzanne Doucet, "Interview with Suzanne Doucet, October 1, 2012.," In person, October 1, 2012. Her organization's name translates as the Regional Department of Architecture and Heritage for Paris and is a branch of the regional government in charge of determining *covisibilité* for construction permits and other tasks related to preservation.

after decades of pressure, the central government had decided that Parisian residents had the right to choose their own leadership. Jacques Chirac, of the right-wing RPR party, won the election and proceeded to use his majority support to expand the role of Paris's mayor.¹⁹

As soon as Chirac took power as mayor, the Hôtel de Ville changed the 1967 law that had given urban planning powers to the Ile-de-France regional government. The city gained more control over all construction by requiring a permit approved by the city—*le permis de construire*—for every structure located in Paris.²⁰ This created yet another check on the transformation of the built environment, though not necessarily in favor of preservation. A large portion of the city's budget was to be used to develop new buildings, especially housing, in Paris. Chirac quickly worked to use the power and budget of the Hôtel de Ville to control and to transform Paris's built environment.

François Mitterrand, elected French president in 1981, did not believe that municipal democratization had gone far enough, especially in the case of Paris. As soon as he took office, his left-wing government passed new legislation intended to fix a perceived problem with laws passed in the 1970s that had given mayors and well-connected people tied to their offices greater power than ever before.²¹ The first article of the *loi de 2 mars 1982* specifically placed the power in citizens: "The communes, departments, and regions constitute the institutional framework of the participation of citizens in local life and guarantee the expression of their diversity."²² Mitterrand, in the case of Paris and other cities in France, wanted to make the mayor more accountable to voters. According to a 1983 report to the prime minister by a commission appointed by Mitterrand that focused on social development in neighborhoods in France, "no progress will be made without the true appropriation of the environment by residents. The redevelopment of space is indispensable to the redevelopment of life [in them]."²³ This policy of "decentralization," as Mitterrand labeled it, would become the cornerstone of his pro-democracy administration.

The decentralizing policies of Mitterrand's left-wing government were not unique to this moment or even to France.²⁴ French communes had often fought for greater independence from

¹⁹ RPR stood for the *Rassemblement pour la république*, or Rally for the Republic, and was the most important party on the right for over twenty years in France. It was center-right and Gaullist in leaning. For the most complete study on Chirac's transformation of the *Hôtel de Ville* as mayor, see Florence Haegel, *Un maire à Paris: mise en scène d'un nouveau rôle politique* (Paris: Presses de La Fondation Nationale Des Sciences Politiques, 1994).

²⁰ Frédéric Vasseur, *Que sais-je ? La mairie de Paris* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 36.

²¹ Marion Paoletti, "La démocratie locale française. Spécificité et alignement," in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 53.

²² "Loi no. 82-213 du 2 mars 1982," *Journal officiel de la République Française* (March 3, 1982): 730–745. Taken from Paoletti, "La démocratie locale française. Spécificité et alignement," 54.

²³ Hubert Dubedout, *Ensemble refaire la ville : rapport au Premier ministre du Président de la Commission nationale pour le développement social des quartiers* (Paris: Collection des rapports officiels, 1983), 75. Taken from Trilling, "Environmental Policy and Metropolitan Growth Land-use Planning in the Paris Region Since World War II."

²⁴ For a longer history of the relationship between municipalities and the state in France since the French Revolution, see Vivien A. Schmidt, *Democratizing France: The Political and Administrative History of Decentralization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Louis Fougère, Jean Pierre Machelon, and François Monnier,

the central state and from departments, the regional government level set up during the French Revolution, but these demands were generally rejected.²⁵ By the 1980s, however, interest in local democracy was growing in developed countries across the world, especially in France where the power of the central state was increasingly viewed as inefficient and unable to deal with the needs of local constituents.²⁶ It was at this point that municipal governments began to cater to local groups and associations, rather than the central state, its representatives, bankers, and others that exerted top-down power on municipalities.²⁷ Across the United States, Europe, and Asia, developing countries saw municipal elections and democracy as an efficient means of creating economic growth, reducing crime, improving quality of life, and increasing faith in the political process in urban neighborhoods.²⁸

Soon afterwards, the important *loi PLM* of December 31, 1982, created public committees at the *arrondissement* level in Paris, Lyon, and Marseille—the three cities in France with *arrondissements*. It also put the position of mayor of each *arrondissement* up for public election, no longer to be appointed by the mayor of the city.²⁹ Mitterrand transferred some tax collecting powers previously in the hands of the central state—usually land and rental taxes—to mayors, and in the case of these three cities, even to the level of the mayors of the *arrondissements*, with the hope that this would create incentives for them to improve their locales. If successful, decentralization would incentivize mayors to increase the value of property in their jurisdictions, to improve their communities, and to end the central government’s policies of municipal favoritism. Too often in the past, municipalities whose mayors were close with important figures in the central government would receive more money from the state. Beginning in 1983, mayors would have to raise their own money to augment their budgets and therefore to realize enough of their campaign goals to be reelected.

eds., *Les communes et le pouvoir: histoire politique des communes françaises de 1789 à nos jours* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002). For a series of articles of postwar local democracy, organized by country, see Oscar W. Gabriel and Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot, eds., *Démocraties urbaines: l'état de la démocratie dans les grandes villes de 12 pays industrialisés* (Editions L'Harmattan, 1999).

²⁵ See Pierre Deyon, “Le long refus de la démocratie locale,” in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 13–19.

²⁶ See Hoffman-Martinot, Vincent, “Les grandes villes françaises : une démocratie en souffrance,” in *Démocraties urbaines: l'état de la démocratie dans les grandes villes de 12 pays industrialisés*, ed. Oscar W. Gabriel and Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot (Editions L'Harmattan, 1999), 113–114. For a discussion of decentralization in France just before the 1970s, see Yves Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation dans le débat politique français: 1945-1969*, Bibliothèque constitutionnelle et de science politique 51 (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1974).

²⁷ Hoffman-Martinot, Vincent, “Les grandes villes françaises : une démocratie en souffrance,” 113–114.

²⁸ See Ted Robert Gurr and Desmond S. King, *The State and the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Richard Batley and Gerry Stoker, eds., *Local Government in Europe: Trends and Developments* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1991).

²⁹ “Loi no. 82-1169 du 31 décembre 1982,” *Journal officiel de la République Française* (January 1, 1983): 3–13. See François Rangeon, “Les comités de quartier, instruments de démocratie locale ?,” in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 334.

Across France, mayors realized that local-level urban planning had to be at the center of any political strategy. By using their powers to change zoning laws, widen sidewalks, change traffic directions, and open schools, mayors could gain popularity with their constituents.³⁰ This was especially the case for individual arrondissements in Paris, where the powers of their mayors were limited. Urban planning was an obvious area on which to focus, as improving streets, buildings, and public facilities pleased most residents.

In 1986, on the other side of the canal in the 10th arrondissement, the city announced a large redevelopment project in the Buisson-Saint-Louis sector to be completed by 1995.³¹ At the center of its plan was demolition and reconstruction. Pierre Lacreuse, an RPR representative of the 10th arrondissement who operated closely with its mayor, Claude-Gérard Marcus, praised the project and suggested that “the residents and businesses currently located [in the Buisson-Saint-Louis sector] live in an environment unfavorable to their flourishing.”³² Most buildings there were old and small—fewer than four stories high—and were officially labeled as dilapidated, giving the Hôtel de Ville the right to demolish them. The city used its social housing division, the Office Publique d’H.L.M. de la Ville de Paris, to purchase a large number of older buildings in the neighborhood in order to “liberate them of their occupants,” to destroy them, and to build newer, larger structures.³³

The city planned to build 350 new housing units in the neighborhood, with 375 parking spots, a gym, a day care center, a school, and small spaces for artisans to rent in order to “maintain and attract artisans and small businesses.”³⁴ This type of construction project was almost identical to projects the French state was developing for the suburbs of Paris and other smaller cities in France. The goal for the city was at once to increase the number of available apartments in order to satisfy the enormous demand for social housing throughout Paris and to also build new spaces capable of holding more services for residents of the neighborhood—day care centers, schools, parks, and the like. The city responded by building upwards, often destroying the previous urban fabric in order to leave parks and green space between buildings. These projects satisfied the demands of current residents, which often included better municipal services and more open space, and also dealt with the citywide problem of a lack of available affordable apartments.³⁵

The city assumed that this was the work residents wanted them to perform. In a survey sent out to residents of the 10th arrondissement in 1987 by Jean-Charles de Vincenti, a

³⁰ For a clear description of their urban planning powers in the post-decentralization era, see Chantal Ausseur-Dolléans, ed., *Guide de la protection des espaces naturels et urbains, Direction de l’architecture et de l’urbanisme* (Documentation Française, 1991), 43.

³¹ This sector included parts of the rue du Buisson-Saint-Louis, rue Saint-Marthe, rue du Chalet, impasse Saint-Marthe, passage Hébrard, and passage Buisson-Saint-Louis.

³² “Rénovation du secteur du Buisson-Saint-Louis,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 1er trimestre 1987).

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ The city never fully succeeded with this project and only constructed a handful of isolated buildings.

representative from the arrondissement on the citywide Council of Paris, he asked citizens to respond to a series of questions on urban planning and housing for the city:

14. What type of accommodations do you want to see developed in Paris (HLM, renovations, new construction, others...)?³⁶
15. What type of professional spaces (office, industrial, artisanal, others...)?
16. Is it necessary to develop green and individual leisure spaces at the expense of constructing housing units or community facilities [schools, day care, etc.]?
17. Are large development or renovation projects necessary in certain neighborhoods in the 10th arrondissement?
18. Should the city force the *copropriétaires* of buildings to have their façades cleaned?³⁷

Vincenti assumed that residents wanted their government to build. The options were diverse—housing units, offices, workshops, parks, sports fields, or day care centers—and would often be important parts of large-scale redevelopment projects, as Vincenti suggested in question 17. It is clear here, regardless of the specific opinions he believed respondents would have, that they understood that their municipal government had the role of improving the urban fabric by changing it and building new spaces to benefit their lives as residents and voters. In 1989, when the RPR was advertising its successes in the 10th arrondissement during its municipal election campaign, six of its eight advertised bullet points were related to things they had physically constructed in the arrondissement: day care centers, libraries, parks, schools, a marketplace, and housing units.³⁸ The new municipal government in the 10th arrondissement had made it a priority to build for its constituents in these zones to the north and east of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Thus arrived urban democracy in Paris, which gave residents the right to choose their municipal leaders, both of the city as a whole and of their arrondissements. Before these laws had changed, direct democracy “was quasi-absent at the municipal level” in France.³⁹ They created a new system that gave power to individuals based on their place of residence. Thanks to one’s residence, a citizen had the right to exert influence over the geographical space surrounding his home. Some scholars have referred to this new regime as one based on the “principle of proximity.”⁴⁰ This was a novel state of affairs in France, contingent on contemporary politics and notions of democracy.⁴¹

Select parts of the Paris city center began to witness the repercussions of these political and legislative changes during the 1970s and 1980s. The state in all of its iterations, along with private enterprise, had put into action a wide variety of plans and procedures, all of which

³⁶ HLM is the term for social housing in France.

³⁷ Jean-Charles de Vincenti, “Paris je t’aime, Paris je t’aide,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 2e trimestre 1987).

³⁸ “Le bilan de la municipalité dans le 10e,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 1er trimestre 1989).

³⁹ Hoffman-Martinot, Vincent, “Les grandes villes françaises : une démocratie en souffrance,” 113.

⁴⁰ Paoletti, “La démocratie locale française. Spécificité et alignement,” 46.

⁴¹ See Vincent Aubelle, “Les sens de la démocratie locale,” in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 297–298.

stimulated private renovation of older buildings. These renovations only occurred, however, in a small percentage of buildings in the city center during this period. The real estate market was not yet strong enough to make it economically enticing, even in *secteurs sauvegardés*, to perform massive renovations.⁴² It was not yet clear to investors that they would profit from a large investment in renovating property. While certain neighborhoods in the city center, such as the Marais, the Latin Quarter, and parts of the 1st, 7th, 8th, 9th, 16th, and 17th arrondissements received large amounts of investment for renovations of their older buildings, the majority of Paris's older structures received minimal upgrades—running water, electricity, and the installation of gas or electric heaters. While the vision of the future of Paris's city center was changing in favor of preservationist renovation and modernization, most areas of the city center continued about their business indifferent to these developments.

This grand preservation/renovation for the entire city center of Paris would take decades to complete. Many areas in the center—including Les Halles, the Sentier, and the Faubourg Saint-Denis—remained minimally touched by these developments. Their trajectories were shaped more by the removal of large-scale industry from the city center and the people and businesses who stepped in to fill the spaces left both in physical buildings as well as in the life of these neighborhoods.

Although the area around Les Halles had been economically devastated by the disappearance of its market and then physically ravaged by the massive construction project in its center, new businesses, residents, and communities quickly moved into the neighborhood. These communities are infrequently discussed in books, articles, films, and other studies on Les Halles in the 1960s and 1970s, almost all of which see the *trou des Halles*, the large hole in which the city's new transport hub and shopping mall were being constructed, as the neighborhood's grave. For almost all scholars, the end of the pavilions was the end of life in the neighborhood. This is a case where nostalgia for one age has clouded scholars' visions of the next.

Perhaps the most revealing source from the 1970s that supports this distorted view of Les Halles is the eccentric 1974 film *Touche pas à la femme blanche* (or *Don't Touch the White Woman!*, as it was released in the United States), directed by Marco Ferreri.⁴³ Shot mainly inside the *trou des Halles* and in its surrounding streets in the style of an American western, it tells the story of an assault on a group of Native Americans who were living inside the hole (see Figure 2).

⁴² For the slow evolution of prices of real estate during this period, see Jacques Friggit, "De Philippe Auguste à François Hollande, le prix des logements à Paris sur huit siècles," *Variances, revue de l'association des anciens élèves de l'École Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Économique*, no. 45 (September 2012), <http://www.cgedd.fr/auguste-hollande-prix-immobilier-paris.pdf>.

⁴³ Marco Ferreri, *Touche pas à la femme blanche*, 1974.



Figure 2. A view from *Touche pas à la femme blanche* of the *trou des Halles* populated by a small group of Native Americans, with soldiers from Custer's cavalry watching from above.

Leaders of big business and the French government, working together, decided that they needed to rid the hole of these native people in order to move forward with their construction project. They therefore solicited the help of George Armstrong Custer, the nineteenth-century American general famous for his success in the American Civil War and his early victories in the American Indian Wars. Custer, dressed in full Civil War-era regalia, spends the duration of the film preparing for a 1974 version of the Battle of Little Bighorn, which ends, as it once had, in his defeat.

This odd plot was an entertaining way for the filmmaker, Marco Ferreri, to criticize the government's demolition and rebuilding project at Les Halles. He used the less-than-subtle metaphor of the Battle of Little Bighorn and the assault on the Lakota and Cheyenne peoples to suggest a comparison with the takeover of Les Halles and its locals by the alliance between big business and the French state. And although the Native Americans (see Figure 3)—who resembled the contemporary hippie college students who liked to take to the streets against the French government—won the battle at the end of the film, they remained at the mercy of the technocrats who were only waiting to return with a new way to attack them in the future.



Figure 3. Native Americans in the rubble of the Les Halles destructions, waiting to fire at one of Custer's soldiers in *Touche pas à la femme blanche*.

This film continued in the tradition of the politics of the protests against the destruction of Les Halles discussed in Chapter 2. It saw Les Halles, as many scholars have, as representative of the much larger fight between the less powerful Parisians and the dominant powers that wanted to take their city from them. The film is lighthearted and does not take itself very seriously, and one cannot therefore simply analyze it as a political statement against the rebuilding of Les Halles. It is nevertheless representative of what the *trou des Halles* symbolized to French society. It was a dead construction site, taken from the people of Paris, and a symbol of a future to fear with its ultra-modern shopping mall, hotels, and other buildings that would soon be built over its ashes.



Figure 4. A scene of the south side of Les Halles during reconstruction from *Touche pas de la femme blanche*.

While Parisians lamented these changes, the Les Halles neighborhood slowly redeveloped on its own, independent of the government’s construction project. The first wave of new arrivals to the neighborhood, as it was remembered by Jean Abou, a fashion writer and a regular in the neighborhood at that time, were *brocanteurs*, dealers in second-hand goods like vendors at flea markets.⁴⁴ The *brocanteurs* first moved into empty retail spaces at the southern part of the rue Saint-Denis, just between the two construction sites at Les Halles and at the future Centre Pompidou. After the market had closed, many large retail and commercial spaces, previously devoted to wholesale food businesses, were available at very low prices. They were ideal for these dealers in that they could keep a large stock available for viewing by customers in their shops and not buried in storage at a different location.⁴⁵

The lower part of the rue Saint-Denis between the Etienne Marcel and Châtelet metro stations soon became known as the neighborhood not only for *brocanteurs* but also for small, independent fashion boutiques and art galleries.⁴⁶ This younger crowd tied to the fringes of the fashion and art world had followed the early success of the flea market dealers into the area. The Les Halles neighborhood was attractive to them for a number of reasons: cheap rents, abandoned buildings—like those seen in the background of Figure 4—a neighborhood that had been

⁴⁴ Jean Abou, “Interview with Jean Abou, October 3, 2012,.” In person, October 3, 2012.

⁴⁵ Interview with J.P.F., June 6, 2012

⁴⁶ Abou, “Interview with Jean Abou, October 3, 2012.”

drawing many people for art-related events in the pavilions before their destruction, and the cachet and absurdity of living outside the biggest construction site in the city. Art galleries also saw an opportunity to be located close to the future Centre Pompidou, which opened in 1977.

Three clothing designers, according to Jean Abou, blazed the trail for the rest: Sao, Boa, and Pluck.⁴⁷ After having gained some popularity in the fashion press, these designers began to attract American buyers to the neighborhood around 1977, when the Pompidou Center opened.⁴⁸ For Abou, these buyers and the attention they brought to this part of Paris persuaded a wave of other clothing designers and vendors to venture into the neighborhood, including brands like Agnès B. Their shops were generally located near the *brocanteurs* just off the rue Saint-Denis and the rue Pierre-Lescot.

By the time the most important fashion trade show in Paris, the Salon PAP (*prêt-à-porter*), opened in 1983, the fashion designers whose workshops and stores were in the vicinity of the *trou* were already viewed and marketed as the “Groupe des Halles.”⁴⁹ In a pamphlet supporting these designers for the Salon PAP that year, Abou wrote that “it is not easy to define the Groupe des Halles. From the outside, this group appears to be lacking unity and is disparate, from punk to hippy.”⁵⁰ The neighborhood had come to define this group of young designers. Despite their diversity of style and approaches to fashion, they were defined by the place where they worked, hung out, and—in some cases—lived.

The designers in the neighborhood made frequent trips to the Marché Saint-Pierre, Paris’s fabric marketplace located a few miles to the north at the bottom of Montmartre in the 18th arrondissement. They then brought their purchases back to their boutiques, where they produced and sold their clothing. Some of these designers, including N.V., who spent almost fifteen years working in the neighborhood, also rented apartments near their boutiques.⁵¹

When their work days were done, many of the people involved in this small social world flocked to Joe Allen, an American restaurant just outside the Étienne-Marcel metro station. As many of Les Halles’s bars, cafés, and restaurants had closed since 1971 and the remaining ones were unhip, ordinary, or frequented by tourists, Joe Allen filled a gap in the neighborhood’s cultural offerings. Like the Café des Fourreurs for workers in the fur industry during the 1950s and 1960s, Joe Allen was the central meeting point for this community of young designers. For them, more so than the clothing manufacturers in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, their work world was also their social world. Most of them were in their twenties and thirties and chose a lifestyle in art and fashion, not clothing manufacturing.

In interviews with people who had participated in the neighborhood in the 1970s, they remembered it as being an incredibly vibrant place, one that significantly shaped their lives. A

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Jean Abou, *Le groupe des Halles (pamphlet)* (Paris, 1983).

⁵⁰ Ibid. One of the most important early punk designers in Paris, Titus, was located in the neighborhood beginning in 1978-79.

⁵¹ N.V., “Interview with Mme N.V., June 6, 2012,” In person, June 6, 2012.

group of the shopkeepers in Les Halles continued to see each other regularly in 2012 at a monthly party, “Le Jour de la Sirène,” held the first Wednesday of every month at the home of Jacques Fivel, a high-end vintage fashion dealer.⁵² Fivel, Jean Abou, N.V., J.P.F. and many others who had met in the Les Halles neighborhood in the 1970s and 1980s all regularly came to this nighttime party, despite having moved to different parts of Paris. Fivel’s home, located in the 20th arrondissement, became the meeting point for young people in fashion as well as the *brocanteurs*, designers, and vendors from Les Halles, who in 2012 ranged in age from 50 to 80 years-old and were often retired from their work. The social bonds formed when they were newcomers to Les Halles in the years of the *trou* remained strong many years later. While the disappearance of the pavilions and construction project upset most Parisians, they brought opportunities to others. The Les Halles neighborhood, despite the end of an era, was thriving again by the late 1970s.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis was undergoing a similar transformation to Les Halles in the 1970s and 1980s. The center of its economy—in its case, manufacturing—was dealing with new economic challenges, while its retail shops—clothing, food, and others—were struggling to stay afloat. While this was not always an easy transition for the neighborhood, which began to have a bad reputation for drugs, prostitution, and other vices, it was a period of rebirth and growth. New immigrants—many of whom were political refugees—brought their own businesses to fill the spaces left by previous retail and manufacturing companies. The proximity of the Faubourg Saint-Denis to the major train stations and its architecture of narrow streets and *passages* with small spaces and affordable rents made the neighborhood an attractive place.

The manufacturing collapse that hit many cities around the world did not miss this part of Paris. Major sites in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, whether they were manufacturing plants or social centers, closed down, but were quickly occupied by new companies. The biggest employer located at the heart of the neighborhood in 1960, the *Parisien Libéré* newspaper, closed its printing presses and offices in 1975 after a period of declining subscriptions and a strike by its workers crippled the paper.⁵³ By the mid-1980s, its offices and printing presses at 16 and 18 rue d’Enghien had been occupied by another printing company, Impression Composition Photogravure.⁵⁴ By the early 1980s, its printing presses at 7 and 9 rue des Petites-Ecuries had turned into offices for the Crédit Agricole bank. After significant renovations to the bottom two floors and the addition of three stories above, the building became offices for a variety of advertising, printing, music, among other firms. Beginning with the establishment of New

⁵² I attended this party on June 6, 2012, where I was able to interview many of the people who used the Les Halles neighborhood in the 1970s and 1980s.

⁵³ See the news report on the history of *Le Parisien*, the new name of *Le Parisien Libéré*: “Parisien Reportage,” *Dailymotion*, n.d., http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4h0l9_parisien-reportage_news.

⁵⁴ *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues* (Paris: Ministère des postes et télécommunications, 1983), 16 & 18 rue d’Enghien.

Morning, a jazz and world music venue, in the early 1980s and later, Studio Bleu, a music and dance rehearsal studio in 1986, this building would soon become a new hub for the arts in the neighborhood.⁵⁵ Companies working in both older and newer industries tried their hand at making their businesses work in these spaces.



Figure 5. Courtyard of old Baccarat factory at 30 bis rue de Paradis. Note the nineteenth-century entrance and staircase in the center of the photograph, the only part of the original structure that was kept. (Author's photograph, April 7, 2010)

The famous Baccarat crystal factory and headquarters on the rue de Paradis was also closed down in the early 1970s and renovated into a series of office buildings (Figure 5).⁵⁶ As the structures were not protected and situated inside a courtyard, the developer had more flexibility to change the old factory into spaces suitable for new tenants. The developers and their architects chose to demolish the entire site and rebuild from scratch, which cost less than half as much as renovation and could be finished much more quickly. They kept only one small remnant of the nineteenth-century steps and entry arch (Figure 5) as a memory of the factory. Although

⁵⁵ Ibid., 7 & 9 rue des Petites-Ecuries; William Mahder, ed., *Paris Création : une renaissance* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 1984), 231; Philippe Tricaud, “Interview with Philippe Tricaud, September 7, 2012,” In person, September 7, 2012. Tricaud is the owner and founder of Studio Bleu.

⁵⁶ The request for a construction permit was submitted to the city in the first half of 1973. See “Demandes de permis de construire parisiens, vol. 21 (1946-1985)”, 1985, Archives de Paris, 30, 30 bis & 32 rue de Paradis.

Baccarat originally rented some of the new space for a short-lived museum, the majority of the new offices housed financial, fur, advertising, and other types of companies.⁵⁷

Although the neighborhood replaced its failed large businesses with new ones, their closures had a trickle-down effect. Many of the smaller businesses working in the printing and crystal industries lost their biggest clients and therefore closed as well. Although some businesses, like the printing firm that moved into part of *Le Parisien Libéré's* offices, benefited from a continuing local economy tied to these industries, the larger economic picture from the early 1970s through the 1980s in the Faubourg Saint-Denis is one of gradual—though not complete—replacement of these manufacturers with businesses in the service industries.

Beyond the crisis in large-scale manufacturing, the Faubourg Saint-Denis and the rest of Paris's shopping districts had to deal with the transformation in the retail economy. The Ministry of the Economy and Finance saw the crisis beginning as early as 1969.⁵⁸ In 1970, the Ministry suggested that shopkeepers would need to use their “creative imagination” to get past the “malaise” caused by the rising power of big commercial businesses and globalization.⁵⁹ These trends would continue to transform the street commerce of big cities in France over the next forty years.⁶⁰

The outlook was not good for smaller food stores. The Ministry believed that there would be a significant decrease in their numbers by 1975 due to the rising power of supermarkets, which were expected to grow considerably. Between 1964 and 1970, they had already moved from controlling 3.7 percent of the retail food market to 14 percent. This trend was not about to stop and was not unique to France.⁶¹ All developed countries were affected by the growth of large-scale food retailing and the difficulty for small grocery stores to compete with supermarket buyers.⁶² Their growth was pushed by governments as part of macroeconomic policy, as the lower prices people would pay for food at supermarkets would allow them to spend more of their disposable income on other goods and services.⁶³ By the end of the 1980s, supermarkets were the norm, even in Paris.

This was especially difficult for businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, as a large portion of their clientele came to the neighborhood because its streets were a marketplace. Customers,

⁵⁷ *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, 30 bis rue de Paradis. The Baccarat museum was closed during the first decade of the 21st century.

⁵⁸ Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances, Direction générale du commerce intérieur et des prix, *Le commerce à l'horizon, 1975* (Paris: la Documentation française, 1970), 3.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 5. For the story of a similar malaise in England, see “Chapter 6, High Street Blues: Retailing and Urban Decline” in Carl Gardner and Julie Sheppard, *Consuming Passion: The Rise of Retail Culture* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 126–151.

⁶⁰ For example, on the history of FNAC, the bookstore that became the largest electronics and music vendor in cities across France, see Didier Toussaint, *L'inconscient de la FNAC : l'addiction à la culture* (Paris: Bourin, 2006).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶² For the story of the rise of supermarkets in England, see “Chapter 7, The Supermarket: Hard Selling in the Food Business,” in Gardner and Sheppard, *Consuming Passion: The Rise of Retail Culture*, 152–181.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 153.

who would have come to the area in 1960 to see a wide range of clothing in a variety of shops, would have been more likely by 1980 to go to a shopping mall outside of Paris or a Monoprix department store where they could buy brand-name products produced abroad at better prices in a more modern setting. Instead of coming to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to visit its variety of food shops, visitors might instead choose to go to a Monoprix supermarket—one was located at 91 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis—where they could buy all of their products at once at lower prices than in the smaller shops. Cheaper products and convenient, modern shopping experiences brought many former customers to other places in the Paris region.

The Hôtel de Ville did attempt to keep some smaller fruit and vegetable sellers in the neighborhood. In 1987, they destroyed the Haussmann-era iron-and-glass market located on the rue du Château-d'Eau one block east of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin, which had been built on a smaller scale than the Les Halles pavilions.⁶⁴ In its place, the city organized the construction of a modern marketplace, complete with housing units above and many parking spots underground, a sort of a suburban-style shopping mall for food. In the name of façade conservation, as architects had done at the Baccarat factory, they left one archway of the original marketplace standing. This plan had been in the works since 1983.⁶⁵ Like the previous marketplace, the new construction was open six days a week—except Monday—and consisted of many small vendors—a fishmonger, a few fruit and vegetable stands, a cheese seller, etc. Although the new marketplace was not a resounding commercial success, it did successfully keep smaller food businesses in the neighborhood.

Telephone book records show that 1980 was the moment of significant economic transformation for the *passages* in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. At this time, new types of businesses—many of them short-lived—that could not afford higher rents on the street set up shop in the *passages*. These included ethnic restaurants (Restaurant Istanbul at 23 passage du Prado), ethnic grocery stores (Shalimar Trading Center at 59 passage Brady), hair and nail salons (pedicures by Lucie Ben Said at 68 passage Brady and a men's barber shop, Daniel Colleu, at 22 passage du Prado), and other small shops like an African record shop (Afro Rythmes at 65 passage Brady).⁶⁶ The clothing shops that had filled the *passages* of the neighborhood from the beginning of the twentieth century through the 1960s did not weather the economic transformation of the 1970s. The old clothing stores rapidly closed but then reopened with newly arrived shopkeepers throughout the 1970s and remained part of the garment industry.⁶⁷ While many of the storefronts remained closed—the telephone books listed many addresses without

⁶⁴ “Marché Saint-Martin,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 4e trimestre 1987).

⁶⁵ “Vers l’amélioration du Marché Saint-Martin,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 2e trimestre 1983).

⁶⁶ See *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*.

⁶⁷ See entries for the Passages du Prado, Brady, and de l’Industrie in *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1970. Liste par rues* (Paris: Ministère des postes et télécommunications, 1970); *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1973. Liste par rues* (Paris: Ministère des postes et télécommunications, 1973); *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1976. Liste par rues* (Paris: Ministère des postes et télécommunications, 1976).

businesses—the *passages*, by the end of the 1980s, became filled with immigrant-focused businesses, especially in the Passage Brady, where many Indian and Pakistani restaurants, grocery stores, and barber shops appeared. The *passage*, an outmoded form of architecture for shopping that was replaced in the middle of the nineteenth-century by bigger retail stores along the Grands Boulevards and then modern shopping malls, continued to be useful to new immigrants. They not only could afford their affordable rents and small spaces, but also could use the protected interiors of the *passages* as a social space to chat with other shopkeepers and customers.⁶⁸

The crystal, porcelain, and silverware shops along the rue du Paradis held on longer than the companies that manufactured their products. As these goods were specialty luxury items that were not as influenced by the rise of large-scale retail chains, the shops that sold them on the rue de Paradis faced less outside competition. In the mid-1970s, the neighborhood remained the center for the industry in France. In the 1976 Paris phone book, the *Annuaire Téléphone*, not only were hundreds of businesses listed in the neighborhood tied to the industry, but also a number of shops on the rue de Paradis bought full-page advertisements, a rarity in the phone book.⁶⁹ A group of eighteen shops on the street paid for one, calling attention to the street as the “World Center for Porcelain and Crystal.”⁷⁰ They brought attention to both the wide variety of products for the home they offered—silverware, crystal, pewter-ware, lamps, glassware, and dinnerware—and their special packages for holiday gifts and wedding registries. They were targeting customers coming from other parts of the region, as they used part of their advertisement to depict a map of the neighborhood. The map located the rue de Paradis near the obvious monuments in the area, the Portes Saint-Denis and Saint-Martin as well as the Gares du Nord and de l’Est, to make sure that customers knew their way. They also noted the street’s proximity to three metro stations (Poissonnière, Gare de l’Est, and Gare du Nord) and, for people driving to their shops, to the two parking garages nearby. These shops were making a push to keep the rue de Paradis as the retail center for this industry.

Circumstances were changing, however, and their attempts to strengthen the industry did not succeed. Seven years later, in the 1983 phone book, this group of shops ran the same advertisement.⁷¹ This time, however, only twelve of the eighteen stores remained in business. Many other businesses on the street, both production and retail, had also closed.⁷² Their potential customers did not invest the same amount of money in these luxury products for the home as they had in the past. For many people, these products were old-fashioned in style and unnecessary expenses. Although Ikea had not yet arrived to change the way home decoration and

⁶⁸ For the most complete study on the history and development of the architecture of *passages* in cities around the world, see Johann Friedrich Geist, *Le passage : un type architectural du XIXe siècle*, trans. Marianne Brausch, 1ère éd. française rev. et complétée. (Liège, Belgium: P. Mardaga, 1989).

⁶⁹ See *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1976. Liste par rues*, rue de Paradis.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁷¹ *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, 1476.

⁷² *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, rue de Paradis.

furniture were sold, families had begun to spend less on fancy items for the home and more on appliances and other leisure expenses. In addition, the Faubourg Saint-Denis no longer remained an attractive place for people to do luxury shopping. Together, this variety of structural economic changes—to production, distribution, and retail sales—gradually took its toll on a number of the businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Other neighborhood attractions also closed during this moment of change for the neighborhood, though new ones replaced them, often in the same spaces. The center for boxing in the Paris region, the Central Sporting Club at 57 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, shed its gloves for the last time in 1968. The neighborhood lost, with it, a large community of regular visitors.⁷³ While it took eight years to fill its empty space, in 1976 it received a tenant that similarly attracted outsiders to the neighborhood, the Ecole Jacques Lecoq, which would soon become one of the most important professional theater and mime schools in the world.⁷⁴ Its students filled the cafés of the neighborhood just as the club's boxers had previously done. In the same year, Marcel Marceau, the world-renowned mime, opened his school just a few minutes' walk away near the Porte Saint-Martin, where it used the spaces of an old theater.⁷⁵ These, coupled with the rapid growth of Studio Bleu as a center in Paris for musicians, continued to attract many quotidian artists and performers to the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Some leisure activities based in the neighborhood did not fare as well. The bathhouse at 36 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, the Bains de la Porte Saint-Denis, which had been an important public meeting place for decades, could not compete with the rise of showers and bathtubs in people's apartments, not only those of apartments in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but also those of the quodians in the neighborhood, scattered throughout the Paris region. Baths all over Paris closed during this period, as Parisians chose to bathe in private and, consequently, more frequently. Cleaning oneself in one's own home had become cheaper and more accessible for the average Parisian. The property's owners were unable to find a new tenant for this large space after the baths closed between 1983 and 1985.⁷⁶ Another bathhouse in the neighborhood, located at 11 rue de la Fidélité on the corner of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, had closed even earlier during the 1960s.⁷⁷

⁷³ Boxing did not completely leave the Faubourg Saint-Denis, however. Another famous teacher, Jean Lafond, had opened a studio just outside of *Le Parisien Libéré*'s offices on the rue d'Enghien in 1968, profiting from its proximity to *Le Central* and the familiarity of boxers with the neighborhood. He remained there through the first decade of the twenty-first century. See "Parisien Reportage."

⁷⁴ "Brochure: École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq", n.d., http://www.ecole-jacqueslecoq.com/fic_bdd/accueil_en_fichier/Brochure-basdef_1332512413.pdf.

⁷⁵ "L'école du mime," *L'Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 1er trimestre 1987).

⁷⁶ The baths phone number was turned off at some point during that period. See the entries at 36 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues; Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1985. Liste par rues* (Paris: Ministère des postes et télécommunications, 1985).

⁷⁷ "Taxes patentes et mobilières, Porte-Saint-Denis", 1960, 2477W 11,12, Archives de Paris, 11 rue de la Fidélité; "Taxes patentes et mobilières, Porte-Saint-Denis", 1970, 2477W 31, Archives de Paris, 11 rue de la Fidélité.

The laundromat, a new social site, arrived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis during this 1970s. While it was possible to go to a *blanchisserie* and have your clothing laundered in the 1960s, the following decade brought the self-service laundromat to the neighborhood. Washing and drying one's laundry at one of the handful of self-service locations in the neighborhood, such as Au Palais de la Machine à Laver (The Palace of the Washing Machine) at 26 Boulevard de Strasbourg, became a social event for the first time since the nineteenth century, a chance to meet and converse with new people.⁷⁸

Movie theaters in the neighborhood and all across Paris began to close down with the rise of the videotape and television. While many small movie theaters remained along the Boulevard de Strasbourg, a number closed and were redeveloped. For example, Le Fidélio, the movie theater at 9 rue de la Fidélité that specialized in Arabic-language films with French subtitles, had closed during the 1960s. Although the owner submitted multiple proposals for demolition and reconstruction, beginning in 1969, the city only gave its approval to the third project in 1973.

As the owner awaited approval, the theater had been temporarily turned into offices for Pari Mutuel Urbain, the health insurance arm of the horseracing industry in Paris, the Sociétés des Courses Parisiennes, which was based in the 8th arrondissement.⁷⁹ Rather than the original four-story office building originally proposed in 1969, the owner constructed a six-story residential building, complete with balconies on the top four floors, a typical strategy employed by developers during this period to increase the value of apartments. This, however, was one of the rare instances of a commercial building of any type being turned into housing in the neighborhood. The Faubourg Saint-Denis, despite losing many of its largest businesses remained a stable neighborhood, slowly adapting to a new economy. Unlike other neighborhoods in the 10th arrondissement and elsewhere in Paris, it retained most of its old buildings and structure during the 1970s and 1980s.

By the end of the 1970s, new groups of people, many of whom were recent immigrants to France, took control of the shops on the Faubourg Saint-Denis because of their small retail and manufacturing spaces, affordable rents, central location and ease of access to the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l'Est. During the 1970s, Greeks, Poles, and Yugoslavs arrived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, beginning another period of change for the neighborhood. Around 1980, this process accelerated, as the neighborhood began to attract large numbers of Turkish and Kurdish refugees fleeing the new military dictatorship in Turkey. These immigrants used this neighborhood as many had in the 1950s or even in the 1930s, working in its courtyards and

⁷⁸ Washing one's laundry used to be a social, public act in Paris for women in the nineteenth century. See the early scene in Emile Zola's *L'Assommoir* where Gervaise brings her laundry to wash in the Goutte d'Or neighborhood in what would later become the 18th arrondissement. Emile Zola, *L'Assommoir*, trans. Margaret Mauldon (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). For information on the laundromats in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, see *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1976. Liste par rues*, 26 Bd de Strasbourg & 11 rue de la Fidélité.

⁷⁹ "AdP 2477W 31", 9 rue de la Fidélité.

stores, socializing on the street and in its cafés and bars, and shopping in its marketplace. This period of change was mostly cosmetic—baguettes were frequently replaced by *pide* (Turkish flatbread) and the people spending their days in the Faubourg Saint-Denis came from places farther from Paris than they once had. The neighborhood’s structure remained intact, with its streets maintaining their market feel with its variety of shops and businesses and its regular quotidiens continuing to come to the neighborhood from long distances.

Most of these new immigrants—legal or not—came to France seeking asylum status. The world’s neediest migrants—refugees—have had a long relationship with Paris. France has long been one of the world’s most accepting countries to refugees.⁸⁰ In the late nineteenth century, for example, Russian Jews forced to flee pogroms and Italians unwanted by the new unification government both were received by the French government and allowed to move to Paris. Armenians fleeing mass killings in the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I settled in the 9th arrondissement of Paris. In the 1930s, Germans who fell on the wrong side of the political divide, due either to their left-wing leanings or to their Jewish ancestry, came to Paris to escape the Nazi regime. Spanish Republicans fleeing Franco’s government also arrived in the city at the same time. This open-armed asylum policy continued in the 1970s and 1980s and became an even more significant part of immigration to France.

Most of the immigrants to the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1970s were refugees because of an important policy change just after Giscard d’Estaing became president in May 1974. Due to pressure from labor unions and conservatives to keep available jobs open only to French citizens, his administration ended immigration for work.⁸¹ While immediate family members living abroad could still apply to join a previously immigrated worker in France, no new applications were to be accepted by the government. After this legislation was passed in July 1974, the only available path to legal immigration was to seek asylum. The next great wave of immigration in Paris would therefore be significantly shaped by refugees.

The Greeks and Yugoslavs who arrived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis during the 1970s had come to the neighborhood as political refugees from a dictatorship and from communism, respectively.⁸² Different global conflicts brought other new groups of immigrants to the neighborhood during the 1980s and 1990s. Many Kashmiri and Punjabi Muslims who had left India for Pakistan came to France as the situation there worsened. As in Germany, the majority of Turks who moved to France in the 1980s and 1990s were Kurdish, due to the ethnic conflict between Kurdish independence movements and the Turkish military dictatorship.⁸³ While left-

⁸⁰ See Yves Lequin, ed., *La mosaïque France : histoire des étrangers et de l’immigration* (Paris: Larousse, 1988), 404–410.

⁸¹ Patrick Weil, *France et ses étrangers*, Folio histoire, 2004. (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 122–124.

⁸² The Greek military dictatorship began in 1967 and continued until democracy was restored in 1974.

⁸³ Ibrahim Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” in *Migrations Turques Dans Un Monde Globalisé: Le Poids Du Local*, ed. Anne Yvonne Guillou, Stéphane de Tapia, and Pôleth M. Wadbled (Rennes, France: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 179. For a detailed study on Turkish

wing, often Communist, Turks—including teachers and trade unionists—as well as other enemies of the new military dictatorship arrived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis after the coup of 1980, Kurds generally left Turkey after fighting began between the PKK, the major Kurdish pro-independence group, and the Turkish government in 1985.⁸⁴ The Paris region became a progressively more popular destination for Kurds and Turks by the end of the decade, with a sevenfold increase in asylum seekers in just fifteen months from mid-1988 to the end of 1989.⁸⁵ For the 120,000 Turkish nationals (including Kurds) living in the Paris region by 1992, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was their social hub.⁸⁶

New immigrants found many opportunities to work and to open businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, much as their predecessors had in 1960. For entrepreneurs, rents were low, spaces were small, and there was abundant qualified labor—especially in the clothing and fur industries—to employ. For the least skilled workers who had no familiarity with the French language, jobs were easily available in clothing manufacturing, construction, and building repairs thanks to immigrant networks. Besides these networks there were a significant number of temporary employment agencies, including a new arrival in the neighborhood, Manpower, which would soon become the biggest company of its kind in France.⁸⁷

Just as in 1960, spending time in the public space of the neighborhood helped people find jobs. For example, found taped to an empty wall of a building on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in a two-second shot from a news report in 1991 were two pieces of paper advertising “CHERCHE UN MECANICIEN QUALIFIÉ EN CONFECTIION” (“looking for an advanced worker qualified in clothing manufacturing”) with an illegible address and telephone number and the second, “Cherche mecaniciens qualifiés, 65 Rue fbg St Denis no. 15” also with an illegible telephone number.⁸⁸ One needed to walk the streets of the neighborhood to find certain jobs.

All the immigrant groups present in the neighborhood opened businesses in the garment industry, whose small workshops weathered the manufacturing downturn in the neighborhood thanks to a steady demand for clothing made on short notice.⁸⁹ Their arrival accelerated the

immigration to France, see Verda Irtis-Dabbagh, *Les jeunes issus de l'immigration de Turquie en France: état des lieux, analyse et perspectives* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2003).

⁸⁴ Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” 182.

⁸⁵ Quoted from the statement of an OFPRA (Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides, or the French Protection Office for Refugees and Stateless People) official. Christine Ockrent and Alain Wieder, “L’immigration clandestine,” TV Broadcast, *Antenne 2* (Paris: France 2, January 30, 1990), Institut national de l’audiovisuel.

⁸⁶ Abdellah Ouahhabi, “Emission Islamique : Connaître l’Islam,” TV Broadcast (Paris: France 2, September 20, 1992), Institut national de l’audiovisuel.

⁸⁷ Its presence on the Boulevard de Strasbourg near its intersection with the Boulevard de Magenta helped create a future hub for employment agencies in the area, conveniently located near the Gare de l’Est and Gare du Nord. *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1985. Liste par rues*, 58 Bd de Strasbourg.

⁸⁸ “L’immigration clandestine,” TV Broadcast, *Le Droit de Savoir* (Paris: FR1, June 24, 1991), Institut national de l’audiovisuel.

⁸⁹ In the 1976 phone book, there are many examples of Yugoslav, Polish, and Greek names running garment-related businesses. People of all three backgrounds—said with caution as this is based on name recognition—ran

turnover of the industry in the neighborhood, as the more modern machinery they had purchased for their workshops vastly outperformed that of many of the older ones still operating.⁹⁰ As immigrant groups gradually opened grocery stores, barbershops, and cafés in the neighborhood, they provided even more employment opportunities for newcomers.

While some, though not most, of the neighborhood's older food shops began to close their doors in the 1970s, most reopened under new ownership, sometimes with a slight modification of product.⁹¹ In 1985, the *Cros crèmerie*, or dairy vendor, which had been based at 54 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis for decades was sold to new owners and became Les Fromages de France, selling very probably a similar line of products.⁹² Binet, the *pâtisserie* based at 9 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis through the 1970s, was sold by the mid-1980s to another pastry chef, Félix Hannouna. Some shops, however, closed for good, including all but one *triperie*, or tripe and offal-centric meat vendor.⁹³ This mirrored a general transition away from organ meat in France during the 1970s. Butchers took over the businesses of the *triperie* and began to include a small selection of organ meats in their available cuts to satisfy the remaining clientele that sought them out. Despite these changes and the significant presence of immigrant groups in the neighborhood, most food shops on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis remained traditionally French through the 1980s.

As in 1960, it would be incorrect during this period to look at the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a neighborhood of different, separate ethnic groups. While certain groups had sites that only they frequented—including a number of Turkish and Kurdish tea salons or Greek cafés (La Belle Salonique, for example) that were often open to men from specific regions in their home countries—most sites in the neighborhood were mixed. Turks, Kurds, and Greeks shopped at many of the same grocery stores since they imported and ate similar foods. Of the immigrants who lived in the neighborhood, most lived in ethnically mixed buildings, such as 6 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, in which in 1983 resided people with Greek names—Gatakis, Kantiros,

businesses tied to the clothing industry in two buildings facing each other on the rue des Petites-Ecuries (numbers 12 and 13). In number 12, Nevarovitch (Yugoslav or Russian) ran a leather workshop and Luszezanowski (Polish) ran a garment production business. At Number 12, B. Milacic (Yugoslav) ran a clothing business, J. Pujda (Yugoslav) ran a fur business, J. Ulhir (Czech) ran a publishing business, and Mme Ekonomopolous (Greek) worked as a seamstress out of her home. *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1976. Liste par rues, 12 & 13 rue des Petites-Ecuries.*

⁹⁰ Mme N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012," In person, September 6, 2012.

⁹¹ On the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, many cafés, restaurants, and food vendors remained in business through the 1970s and 1980s. These included older restaurants (Julien), cafés, produce vendors, butchers, bakeries, wine sellers, and other shops.

⁹² *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues, 54 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis; Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1985. Liste par rues, 54 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.*

⁹³ Jean-Paul Civet, a *tripier* at 29 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, remained open until the 1990s when his shop was taken over by Saint Denis Primeurs who expanded their shop at 31 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1985. Liste par rues, 29 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.*

and Mavromatis, for example—others with Turkish names—Topcan, Aygul, and Horzun—a Yugoslav name, Rajovski, and a Jewish name, Wajnfeld.⁹⁴ Those that worked in the neighborhood worked in ethnically mixed buildings as well. At 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, a commercial building still occupied by clothing and fur manufacturers in 1983, the owners of its businesses came from a wide variety of ethnic groups.⁹⁵ Turks or Kurds (Mustapha Hayurli, Vahal Ekim, Petar Cecik, and Yusuf Coskun, for example), Yugoslavs (Milovanovic), Jews (Flaschner), and Pakistanis (Khan), shared the same hallways. If they kept the doors of their workshops open, as Mr. L.K.'s father and cousin, Mr. J.G., did in the building in 1960, they would have all very likely known one another, even if they did not work in related businesses.⁹⁶

Most frequented non-ethnic cafés, such as Le Sully at 13 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis or Chez Jeannette at 47 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, because there were not many ethnic-focused cafés in the neighborhood. Adnan, a Turkish construction worker who moved to the neighborhood in the early 1980s, has been hanging out with Turkish friends at Le Sully every Sunday since he came to Paris, staying with the café through many ownership changes.⁹⁷ Like Adnan, most immigrants who spent time in the Faubourg Saint-Denis maintained close ties with people of the same background while also interacting every day, both at the workplace and when socializing, with people outside of their ethnic group. Even though his closest friends spoke Turkish, they spent their days in the mixed space of the café.

The mosque was also a place of ethnic diversity and mixing for immigrants. Observant Muslim Turks, Kurds, Pakistanis, and others in the neighborhood prayed together at one of a handful of small mosques that opened up in the courtyards of buildings on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁹⁸ They were also a first point of arrival for many newcomers. According to the imam of the 'Ali Ibn Al Khattab mosque at the back of the courtyard at 83 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, forty illegal Muslim immigrants—almost all men—arrived weekly from all over the world at his mosque in 1990.⁹⁹ He could offer 25 of them at a time temporary housing in the basement

⁹⁴ There was one almost 100 percent Turkish building in 1983 on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, in which Adnan still lives. It was owned by a Turk who then rented it to new arrivals. Most did not have the opportunity to reside in the Faubourg Saint-Denis since the housing opportunities for immigrants without much wealth were few and far between. Adnan, "Interview with Adnan, 2009." In person, 2009; *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, 6 & 14 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.

⁹⁵ *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.

⁹⁶ Mr. L.K., "Interview with Mr. L.K, September 13, 2012," In, September 13, 2012.

⁹⁷ "Interview with Adnan, 2009."

⁹⁸ Observant Muslims made up only a small percentage of the immigrants from majority-Muslim countries, as many were Socialists and Communists who shunned religious practice. The first mosque on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis was a Turkish mosque based at 64 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, just south of the rue du Château-d'Eau. *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1983. Liste par rues*, 64 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. The same group, the Association de l'Union Islamique, also founded a second mosque, Al-Fatih, at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1985. See Ouahhabi, "Emission Islamique : Connaître l'Islam."

⁹⁹ Ockrent and Wieder, "L'immigration clandestine."

of the mosque to help them while they got their bearings. Soon after, they would generally leave the mosque for housing in the suburbs, but would still return to the neighborhood for work and their social life. Although most of the attendees were Turks and Kurds, Mour Seck, a Senegalese Muslim, attended prayers at the Al-Fatih Mosque at 23 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis regularly because it was the mosque closest to his job.¹⁰⁰ He enjoyed learning the practices of Muslims with different traditions and practices than his own. For him the mosque was an international place of “solidarity.”¹⁰¹ The Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1970s and 1980s was a place where many immigrants could live as they did back at home. They could purchase their food, speak their own language, and have their hair cut while listening to their favorite sports team on the radio. Their interactions in the public space of the neighborhood, however, brought them into contact with many other people of different backgrounds from their own.

The immigrant groups mentioned were not the only ones participating in life in the Faubourg Saint-Denis; they were simply the most visible thanks to their ownership of businesses. People from many other backgrounds who spent considerable amounts of time in the neighborhood are often lost from the archives.¹⁰² We do know, however, that in 1976 a club of Algerian Berbers, or *Kabyles*, the Fraternelle Union des Amis de Tlemcen, was based at 15 rue des Petites-Ecuries.¹⁰³ A Cambodian restaurant, Angkor, was found at 3 rue des Petites-Ecuries, while a small Portuguese restaurant was located just a few doors down.¹⁰⁴ Although these restaurants may have served immigrant groups other than their own, it suggests that Portuguese and Cambodian immigrants—who otherwise did not have a presence in the neighborhood—were quotidiens in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, coming daily to work at their restaurants.

Even though the Faubourg Saint-Denis remained a healthy, developing neighborhood without any major economic crises, it began to have its first serious conflicts between residents and quotidiens. Over the course of the 1980s, drugs came to the neighborhood and its surrounding area, tainting its image in many Parisians’ minds. Prostitution, too, although it had existed in this part of Paris for centuries, had become a significant political problem for the first time because now there were politicians—the mayors of each arrondissement—who could be held responsible by residents for these local issues. Residents were aware and vocal about these problems for the first time in the history of the neighborhood. These problems began in the 1980s and continued into the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The first moment that these issues became important political problems occurred in March 1985 when Alain Dumait, the mayor of the 2nd arrondissement, began a public campaign

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Mour Seck in Ouahhabi, “Emission Islamique : Connaître l’Islam.”

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² This period is especially difficult to write about as many archives remain closed and the *taxe patente* and *taxe mobilière* records from the period do not contain the marginalia that is found in the records from 1960. This makes it more difficult to speak about quotidiens in the neighborhood in the 1970s and the 1980s.

¹⁰³ *Annuaire officiel des abonnés au téléphone de la Ville de Paris, 1976. Liste par rues*, 15 rue des Petites-Ecuries.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 3 & 6 rue des Petites-Ecuries.

to rid the rue Saint-Denis—the continuation of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis on the other side of the arch—of prostitution.¹⁰⁵ The rue Saint-Denis had been known for centuries as the center of prostitution in Paris and Dumait wanted to do his best as mayor to bring an end to the negative image associated with the neighborhood. At the same time, as some residents and prostitutes argued, Dumait sought to help real estate investors, some of whom were Dumait's friends, profit from potential evictions of apartments owned by pimps.¹⁰⁶ Dumait's project to dismantle networks of prostitution ended up failing to meet its goals, although it did bring their neighborhood's problems and potential solutions to the attention of the residents of Paris's city center and to the Mairie of each arrondissement.

While prostitution became the political problem for the Saint-Denis neighborhood in the 2nd arrondissement during the 1980s, drugs and vagrancy became the focus of residents in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2012, Mlle O. looked back at her experience in the late 1990s in the Faubourg Saint-Denis and remembered it as a dark era in the neighborhood. She started to spend time there in 1997 just after she moved to Paris from Savoie, where she had grown up.¹⁰⁷ At the time, she was twenty years old and her first boyfriend lived at 57 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, where the boxing club, Le Central, had once been located and where the Ecole Jacques Lecoq had replaced it. For two years she visited him at his apartment regularly, sleeping there multiple times per week, and in the last year, between 1999 and 2000, she lived with him full-time until they ended their relationship. Mlle O., a professional framer working in the 12th arrondissement, is someone who looks back warmly at her early years in Paris and who is very open-minded about the city, speaking most fondly of late evenings in grimy bars in shady neighborhoods run by elderly men and women. When asked about her experiences in the Faubourg Saint-Denis during those years, however, she immediately focused on the drug dealers and addicts in the neighborhood and in the courtyard of her building.

Mlle O. recalled that 57 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, an address with three buildings—one at the street, one at the back of a first courtyard, and one at the back of a second courtyard—had more problems than most. While other buildings on the street had keypad entry systems, hers did not because of all the students coming in and out of the school. At night, when the school was closed, she passed through both courtyards on her walk back to her apartment, which lay in the last building at the address. She remembered seeing many crack addicts collapsed in the courtyards, as well as deals in progress. The various staircase entrances that led into the apartment buildings were also favorite spots for drug dealers.

Mlle O. did not recall any moments where she was threatened by anyone in her courtyard. She did not feel at risk in the Faubourg Saint-Denis and said that it was not a dangerous place to live, but the drug addicts coming in and out of her building at night marked

¹⁰⁵ Jean-Michel Brigouleix, *Rue Saint-Denis : Rites, personnages et secrets du quartier le plus chaud de Paris* (Paris: Carrère, 1986), 12.

¹⁰⁶ These stories are detailed in Brigouleix, *Rue Saint-Denis : Rites, personnages et secrets du quartier le plus chaud de Paris*.

¹⁰⁷ Mlle O., "Interview with Mlle O., September 7, 2012," In person, September 7, 2012.

her memories. When asked why she and her boyfriend did not leave the neighborhood, she said that the drug problem was never bad enough to convince them to move elsewhere. They paid low rent, liked the space, and liked its central location in Paris.

Philippe Tricaud, the manager and owner of Studio Bleu at 7-9 rue des Petites-Ecuries, agreed that the neighborhood was never truly dangerous, just uncomfortable at night, especially for women. From the opening of his music and dance studio in 1986 until 2004 or 2005, the neighborhood remained a place that was quiet at night and therefore undesirable to visit. His business was successful during that period, because musicians and dancers were used to rehearsing in uncomfortable neighborhoods. They came to his studio from all corners of the Paris region because it was centrally located and allowed bands and groups to rehearse regardless of where their members lived. For those twenty years, he rarely ever went out at night in the neighborhood. He came from his home, near the Opéra metro, to the Faubourg Saint-Denis

during the daytime for work, only to return at the end of the night.

Mr. Tricaud did not look back fondly at the Faubourg Saint-Denis during these years. He remembers it as a “daytime neighborhood,” a place filled with activity of all types during the day but empty at night. As he described it, most of the buildings remained filled with manufacturing businesses, many of which continued to do work in clothing and fur, among other industries. These businesses closed by the early evening and their buildings, also lacking keycode protection, turned into sites of drug deals. For Mr. Tricaud, speaking in the tradition of Jane Jacobs without naming her, “you are safe in Paris when there are people on the street.”¹⁰⁸ The way he described the Faubourg Saint-Denis, ironically, was reminiscent of the way many employees of financial districts describe its streets at night—dead, empty, and unpleasant.

He referred specifically to a number of old, large manufacturing buildings along the rue Martel that turned into centers for the drug trade at night during the 1990s. Since the rue Martel had only one bar on its corner with the rue des Petites-Ecuries and a small restaurant next door, no other



Figure 6. The interior of Passage Brady in 1988, photographed by D. Herbel for the DRAC. (Centre de documentation, Conservation régionale des monuments historiques, Bureau de la protection, DRAC Ile-de-France)

¹⁰⁸ Tricaud, “Interview with Philippe Tricaud, September 7, 2012.”

businesses were open on the street. As there was very little foot traffic on the street and large empty courtyards with no residents, these buildings were places where communities of homeless drug users could spend the night sleeping without bothering local residents or calling attention to themselves.

The spaces that received the most attention from residents and politicians were the *passages*, or arcades, in the neighborhood. Ever since the closure during the 1970s of many of the clothing shops that had once lined their interiors, the empty storefronts and general disrepair, had given them a bad reputation among outsiders. Although they had successfully attracted new retail businesses after the closure of clothing stores around 1980, residents who lived in apartment buildings above the enclosed shopping areas of the Passage du Prado and Passage Brady (see Figure 6) complained frequently of drug users in their staircases and seedy people—often drug dealers—loitering inside the *passages*. While some *passages* across Paris had begun to receive protected monument status during the 1970s and 1980s, those in the Faubourg Saint-Denis were considered at once unimportant and ugly, not necessarily because of their architecture but because of their reputation as undesirable places.

The *passages* were a special space in the city, at once public and private. Although they operated like extensions of the street to pedestrians—anyone could walk inside them to go shopping, protected from the elements by the glass roof above—they were legally private spaces, owned and controlled by the *copropriété*, or the group of property owners inside of them. This made them in charge of their own trash disposal, for example. Garbage collectors would not come inside the *passage* to collect trash bins at each building; instead, the *copropriété* would be in charge of disposing its trash outside of the building. The boxes lying inside the Passage Brady in Figure 6 were not under the jurisdiction of the police, who assured the free passage of pedestrians and vehicles on streets in Paris. It was up to the *copropriété* to monitor and to police its interior. Most importantly, for residents battling a drug problem, the police were not allowed to cross the threshold of the entrance to a *passage* without the express consent of the entire *copropriété*.

Drug dealers exploited this situation and hung out inside the Passage du Prado, in particular, where they could sell drugs without the risk of the police arresting them. The Passage du Prado, shaped like an L with entrances on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and on the Boulevard Saint-Denis, was conveniently located just outside of the entrance to the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station. The Strasbourg Saint-Denis station was viewed as a place not only of violent robberies, theft, and drug sales, but also “the privileged place of vagrancy, vandalism, and fraud” according to *L’Avenir du 10e*.¹⁰⁹ Police officers, often sent from the CRS, the national anti-riot unit, were frequently present at the metro station in the late-1980s, when it was viewed as a trouble spot not only for drugs but also for violence against passengers inside and outside the station.¹¹⁰ However, they could not enter the Passage du Prado to follow suspects, a situation which exasperated many residents who rented their apartments inside. The police, the mayor’s

¹⁰⁹ “La sécurité dans le métro,” *L’Avenir du 10e* (Paris, 3e trimestre 1987).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

office, and their landlords all ignored their problems, each one claiming a lack of jurisdiction over the territory.

Many residents dealing with problems relating to drugs frequently complained of the lack



Figure 7. An image of graffiti painted on a wall near the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro, saying "Before the Left, now the Right, and the drugs continue." From TF1 Journal, September 14, 1993.

of police response and made themselves heard by taking their grievances to national television and the streets. Residents organized multiple peaceful protests in 1993 along the lower part of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and the Boulevard Saint-Denis, asking the police to stop the drugs in their neighborhood.¹¹¹ In 1994, a few residents of the Passage du Prado went on a television talk show, *Français, si vous parlez*, to discuss their predicament with Claude-Gérard Marcus, the mayor of the 10th arrondissement, who was also invited to participate.¹¹² The host wanted to get to know about the lives of the residents in the *passage* and how they dealt with living in one of the government's 400 hotspots in France for crime, drugs, and delinquency.

For Guy-Georges Defrance, the head of the *copropriété* of the Passage du Prado, between 40 and 50 drug dealers operated inside and outside the *passage* every night and the police did nothing, he claimed. These dealers and drug users left used syringes, condoms, and other garbage littered throughout the *passage* and its staircases, making it a place unfit for children. Léa Carta, an elderly woman who had been living in the *passage* since 1939, complained about drug users and dealers who entered her staircase at night, usually around one or two in the morning, to shoot heroin. As in Mlle O.'s building, they would lay collapsed on the staircase, sleeping on the small landing outside her door, three stories above ground. The addicts, she claimed, used to kick open the entrance to her building when it was secured by a key lock. After the *copropriété* had changed the locks to an electronic keycode system, the addicts managed to figure the codes out and enter the building, even after frequent changes to the code. Living in the Passage du Prado, for Carta, had become very difficult after 1988 or 1989, the moment when drug dealers appeared.

Claude-Gérard Marcus defended his administration and the police. He responded that the city did not have the ability to enter the *passage* to make arrests because it continued to have difficulty obtaining the authorization of the largest property owner in the *copropriété*, the French

¹¹¹ "Manif drogue Paris," TV Broadcast, *TF1 Journal* (Paris: TF1, September 14, 1993), Institut national de l'audiovisuel.

¹¹² Pierre Alain Beauchard, "Sécurité : quand les citoyens se prennent en charge," *Français, si vous parlez* (France 3, May 12, 1994), Institut national de l'audiovisuel.

city of Perpignan, which owned 40 percent of the *passage*.¹¹³ One South Asian worker claimed that the police response had in fact been too aggressive and that simply because he had dark skin the police often asked him for papers when he sat outside the *passage* eating his sandwich at lunch. A police officer on the show said that unfortunately the CRS units sent to deal with the damage are not trained in drug arrests and sometimes made mistakes. It is clear here that there was a complicated situation and a solution was not easy. The *passages*' legal status coupled with inaction by the city and police allowed drug sales to continue unabated in the Passage du Prado into the 1990s.



Figure 8. A man and woman walk north on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in front of Günes, a Turkish *épicerie*, in 1992. (Ouahhabi, “Emission Islamique : Connaitre l’Islam.”)



Figure 9. A man walks in front of construction for a new building at 81 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, across the street from Günes, in 1991. (“L’immigration clandestine”)

While many residents suffered during these years from the neighborhood’s drug problems, life for most users of the Faubourg Saint-Denis was not affected by these issues. People continued to congregate on the street smoking their cigarettes outside cafés. People continued to walk down the street with their shopping bags (Figure 8) or beers (Figure 9) in hand. Animal carcasses continued to be delivered to butchers regularly (Figure 10). Everyday life in the neighborhood continued independently of the neighborhood’s much-publicized problems. Whether it be the *passages* or the bathhouses of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, its spaces on the decline remained very important to the lives of their users, even if their voices were not frequently heard.

The one major bathhouse on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, Plage 50, located at 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, manage to weather all of the closures hitting the industry thanks to a dedicated clientele. It specialized in steam baths for men or in “sauna-hammam” as it advertised itself.¹¹⁴ Not only had Plage 50 been one of the only nineteenth-century baths to operate in Paris after World War II—it had been built in 1837 off the building’s courtyard on the previous site of the stables of Marie Antoinette—it was the

¹¹³ Ibid. Perpignan, like many cities in France, had invested in cheap real estate in Paris in the first half of the twentieth-century to rent to seasonal workers from Perpignan who would need cheap apartments when they came to Paris.

¹¹⁴ These baths had gone by the name Les Grand-Bains Saint-Denis from the nineteenth-century through the 1960s. See “L’Echo : Journal d’intérêt local du Xe arrondissement”, May 17, 1888; *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine* (Paris: Société Didot-Bottin, 1959), 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.



Figure 10. A truck filled with cow carcasses awaits delivery on the rue Saint-Denis just outside of the arch in 1991. (“L’immigration clandestine”)



Figure 11. Plage 50 photographed just after its closure on January 24, 1992 by the DRAC Ile-de-France.

only full steam bath still operating in Paris in 1992, the year it closed.¹¹⁵

The bathhouse’s closure was not the result of a declining clientele (Figure 11). On the contrary, business at this hammam was booming as steam bath devotees from around the region had no choice but to make the trip to the Faubourg Saint-Denis to take the waters. Its closure was a typical story of a complicated inheritance—its owner had died in 1991 and the rest of the family who had inherited the business decided that it was best to sell it.¹¹⁶ The manager of the baths, who lived near the Place de la Concorde in the 1st arrondissement, put together a petition in January 1992 with hundreds of signatures and pleas from Plage 50’s regulars to have the Ministry of Culture step in and save the last public bath in Paris.¹¹⁷

The petition is remarkable not only because it shows who the regulars were at an establishment that attracted quotidian to the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but also because it allowed them a venue to express what it meant to them to come to the baths and to participate in its community. Almost none of the quotidian or infrequent visitors to Plage 50 who signed the petition lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis or anywhere in the 10th arrondissement, yet they all chose to visit the Faubourg Saint-Denis for the baths. Their names—a mix of French, North African, Jewish, Slavic, Turkish, and other names—suggest that the community of the baths was made up of

¹¹⁵ They had all of the variety of rooms of a bathhouse—both hot and warm steam rooms, dry saunas at different temperatures, and cold-water rooms. “Notes from telephone conversation with M. Perrin concerning Plage 50”, January 1992, 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, Centre de documentation, Conservation régionale des monuments historiques, Bureau de la protection, DRAC Ile-de-France. The information is in this archive because a petition sent to the Ministry of Culture to stop Plage 50’s closure suggested that the courtyard was a protected historical site. The *monuments historiques* division at the DRAC Ile-de-France confirmed that it was not a protected site.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ All of the following quotes about Plage 50 come from “Petition against the closure of Plage 50”, November 25, 1991, 50 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, Centre de documentation, Conservation régionale des monuments historiques, Bureau de la protection, DRAC Ile-de-France.

ethnically diverse men, which is not surprising considering the important local traditions of taking the waters in countries around the world. Mr. J.L.M., who lived in the labyrinthine high-rise apartment complex on the rue du Javelot in the 14th arrondissement, wrote that “it is difficult to imagine the closure of this establishment that I have frequented for 43 years.” His trips to the bath would have been inconvenient and taken approximately forty-five minutes each way.

Person after person who signed the petition wrote using similar strong language. Mr. P.A., who lived in Charenton, a suburb to the southeast of Paris, wrote “I will feel very hurt and frustrated if this hammam closes its doors.” Mr. C.F., who did not mark his address, stated that “if the sauna (Place 50) closes, to all of us it will bring death! Death! Death!” Assuming that the Ministry of Culture would not help keep the bathhouse open due to the bad reputation they had received in recent years as centers of gay sex, Mr. M.A. of the 8th arrondissement wrote, “There are no longer hammams. In the hammam that remains, there are not only gays!” Another, who worked there, spoke out of his own self-interest when he listed the reasons for the Ministry of Culture to keep the bathhouse open: “It is the last large hammam in Paris and to keep my job.” Mr. B.P. of the 15th arrondissement asked the government to spare it, saying that Plage 50 was the only remedy he had found for serious kidney problems that he had been dealing with for over fifteen years. If Plage 50 closed, he “would certainly have to begin dialysis.”

Mr. R.A., who lived in the modern heart of Sarcelles, a suburb to the north of Paris that has become (undeservedly) the best-known example of failed urban renewal in French cities, believed that Plage 50 deserved to be protected not because of the value Marie Antoinette imparted to the space, but because of the century-and-a-half-long history that the baths had been in operation: “This establishment could be registered as a historical monument because it constitutes, indeed, a monument where so much happens and where so many people have come from the worlds of sports, arts, politics for many years. For the youth, as for retired people, it is a place for fitness and for relaxation. WE HOPE... WE HOPE... WE HOPE...” Mr. M.A., who lived on the Boulevard Richard Lenoir in the 11th arrondissement, wrote similarly, citing the baths’ use by famous boxers who had been training in the Faubourg Saint-Denis: “[I hope] that this bathhouse continues to function for a long time. It is nearly a national monument. It was and is still frequented by honest, easygoing, and good-mannered people. It was also frequented by the athletes and boxers at the Salle Bretonnel.”



Figure 12. An advertisement for the Grands Bains Saint Denis from the early twentieth century (Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, E(B) 27)

The bathhouse had been an important site for quotidian in the neighborhoods for over a century. From this advertisement pictured above (Figure 12) from the early twentieth-century, it was advertised as a social space for the men who visited it, who, as pictured in the middle image, could play cards or read the newspaper in the steam room or talk while scrubbing, seen in the right-hand image, in one of the many shower and bath rooms.¹¹⁸ The bathhouse, open long hours from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the summer and from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the winter, offered its customers massages—one would assume that this was important for the athletes who frequented the bathhouse—and pedicures.¹¹⁹ They also had the option to dine at a full-service restaurant with a “renowned wine list” and “moderate prices.”¹²⁰ Women were also welcome, as segregated steam rooms—later phased out at some point in the twentieth century—were available to them. The shower rooms, too, had become a less important part of Plage 50, as its customers at the end of the twentieth-century were more interested in the steam rooms and saunas than in cleaning. Although much had changed in the culture of the bathhouse including its previous importance as a site of washing, Plage 50 remained a place of relaxation, rest, and sociability in the lives of the men who visited it regularly when it closed in 1992. For Mr. C.A., who lived in the 18th arrondissement, and many others, “it [was] the only place in Paris where one could truly unwind and relax.”¹²¹ Mr. R wrote the minister: “Have pity, I am a regular of this establishment for 35

¹¹⁸ See “Pamphlet for the Grands Bains Saint Denis (with Tariffs)”, n.d., E(B) 27, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ “Petition against the closure of Plage 50.”

years. I find my true enjoyment and relaxation there and dare to hope that I will always be able to visit it for the rest of my life.”¹²²

Despite all the changes to the Faubourg Saint-Denis’s economy during the 1970s and 1980s and its drug problem from the late-1980s into the 1990s, the neighborhood’s public spaces continued to provide the setting for many different communities, from theater performers to Turks and bathers. It remained a neighborhood filled with vibrant communities, each of which found its place in the changing economic landscape and the unchanging physical landscape of the neighborhood. In the older structures of the neighborhood—the *passages*, printing presses, workshops, apartments—these communities thrived. The story in Les Halles during the 1970s was similar. Even though the neighborhood was living through a difficult period of reconstruction and did not resemble itself at all during the 1960s, newcomers were able to step into empty spaces and make them their own.

One could argue that the transformation of Les Halles in the 1970s was a moment of gentrification—of wealthier, trendier young people in fashion and art—while that of the Faubourg Saint-Denis during the same period was one of urban adaptation, where one group of immigrants or lower middle-class shopkeepers replaced a previous one. Surely their circumstances were different. One had dealt with a government-induced shock of business and resident evictions, as well as large-scale destruction of buildings, the latter only had to deal with inevitable closures of some of its core businesses and the slow decline of the industries tied to them.

Both neighborhoods, however, adapted quickly to change. This was not simply due to their location in the city center and the availability of affordable rents. The variety of their commercial spaces, which fit the demands of newcomers with different means, objectives, and desires, allowed both neighborhoods to adapt. The pre-Haussmann Parisian architectural model of small retail spaces, workshops, and apartments, packed into a dense network of streets proved itself to be resilient hundreds of years later, providing the sites and spaces for important, meaningful communities to form, whether they be at the café, mosque, or bathhouse.

With the rise and public acceptance of preservationism of this older Paris, Parisians’ tastes in architecture and in cities changed accordingly. It is not surprising that many of the designers who moved into Les Halles in the 1970s had also protested against the pavilions’ destruction in 1971.¹²³ The chance to work and to live in a part of Paris that they loved played a significant role in their choice to move there. And while this was not the case for the Faubourg Saint-Denis during this period, many of its future residents and business owners who moved in during the first decade of the twenty-first century expressly desired to live in a neighborhood with old buildings, narrow streets, and small shops, and were willing to pay for it. This taste for

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Abou, “Interview with Jean Abou, October 3, 2012.”

an older Paris would soon come to have a great effect on the development of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the beginning of the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER 5

Cadences

The Separating Visions of Public Space in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, 1998-2012



Figure 1. The rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, looking south toward the Porte Saint-Denis, as filmed in 2005 for the film *Paris, je t'aime*.

Filth is better than the neighborhood being dead.

- Rémi Féraud, Mayor of the 10th arrondissement, at a
conseil de quartier meeting, October 19, 2011

Like the people who regularly visited the Plage 50 bathhouse from all over the Paris region before it closed in 1992, many of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's quotidians today come to relax and hang out with others. While many come for work, their jobs are often a combination of work and socializing. Bartenders, shopkeepers, hawkers, and hair stylists, among others, are in constant interaction with their customers on a personal level beyond their service role. Others, who work in the neighborhood but do not interact with customers on the job, also regularly socialize in the neighborhood before and after work or during breaks. The stories of how they have become quotidians in the Faubourg Saint-Denis are as diverse as they are. These stories are now available, unlike those in the book's previous chapters. Studying a place in the present and in its recent past as an anthropologist can reveal a great deal about the complexities of urban life and neighborhoods that would otherwise be challenging, if not impossible, for a historian to

discover. What were previously traces of quotidian's lives and of the reasons they came to an unglamorous neighborhood can now be seen in full detail. They are there in the neighborhood to be found and are not yet—though soon will be—missing from the archives that rarely include them.

Despite the gentrification and increasing wealth that has come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis, the street and its public spaces have remained a neighborhood of these quotidian's who live far away from the 10th arrondissement. Since the rise of real estate prices began in Paris in 1998 and the arrival of many new residents, the Faubourg Saint-Denis's street life and economy have, for the most part, been strong enough to resist change. Quotidian's continue to come to Faubourg Saint-Denis's shops, *passages*, cafés, and sidewalks in greater numbers than residents and are therefore able to influence which businesses succeed. This was all for the better, according to many of the recently arrived residents. They came to the neighborhood not only because it was affordable, well-situated, and contained older buildings, but because they had been excited to live in a diverse, bustling neighborhood.¹

The actions of these residents, contrary to their own wishes, have often made the neighborhood's public spaces less vibrant. As new homeowners, however, they have been incentivized to clean up and to quiet down its spaces—simply put, to suburbanize its streets. Clean, quiet streets almost always correlate with higher real estate prices in Paris and no new homeowners—most of whom have taken on a considerable amount of debt to buy their apartments—want to lose the value of their investment. Even for residents who rent their apartments—who remain a considerable portion of the population but play a less active role in neighborhood politics—many would prefer that the Faubourg Saint-Denis become calmer.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis's residents are stuck in a bind. While they want to live in a colorful part of Paris, filled with different kinds of restaurants and shops, they also want to walk on tidy streets, ideally with trees and parks nearby, and also to sleep through the night without being woken by street noise. These two desires often contradict each other. Even those who say that they do not want the neighborhood to change, who love its commercial, ethnic, and class diversity, cannot help but promote a new vision for the urban space of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, one that rewrites the rules for how its public space is used. Although they, often alongside the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement, have worked together to change the Faubourg Saint-Denis, they have until now been unable to control it and shape it to their liking. Its streets remain vibrant, dancing to their own beat.

¹ Most residents that I have spoken with, however, assumed, as most people do, that the people they see every day hanging out in the neighborhood's cafés and streets lived nearby, either in unrenovated and cheaper apartments or in social housing. Many have been surprised when I explained that most of the people they see out in the neighborhood commute to it regularly.

As the Faubourg Saint-Denis has moved into the twenty-first century, many new residents have moved into the neighborhood. It, like many other parts of Paris on the Right Bank—Belleville, Ménilmontant, the Canal Saint-Martin, Oberkampf, Montorgeuil, and the Rue des Martyrs, to name just a few—has become increasingly attractive to young people to live. This international movement of gentrification—as it has often been labeled—in which educated individuals with social standing choose to live in older, cheaper parts of cities they once would have avoided, has had a massive effect on Paris’s public space and the Faubourg Saint-Denis in particular.² In 2012 the Faubourg Saint-Denis, in short, has become a sought-after place to live.

A newfound tolerance for the different in big cities around the world has helped bring about this situation. In earlier times, Parisians of higher social standing—whether they were wealthy, well educated, or of an elite background—would not have wanted to live in a neighborhood where one finds poorer people, especially immigrants, on the street and in its shops. Some people did appreciate and desire to live surrounded by this diversity in the past, but only recently has a widespread valorization of neighborhoods like these quickly attracted many new residents. Since 2000, apartments have been renovated at an ever-increasing pace, expensive lofts built out of manufacturing workshops, and multiple layers of security codes installed on buildings’ doors in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. The new residents who have come to the neighborhood have spent and continue to spend considerable sums of money to live there. Above the ground level, the Faubourg Saint-Denis, like the majority of Paris, has become a place where residents have to be willing to spend a lot of money to rent or to buy an apartment.

These residents, who increasingly are homeowners, have often attempted to use their power as voters and taxpayers to exert their will on how public space is used in the neighborhood. As mentioned in Chapter 1, this became possible after the 1958 change to the *Loi de copropriété* that allowed older buildings to be split up into multiple units, each having separate owners. By allowing renters—who previously did not have the option to own their apartments or offices—to purchase their units, the government hoped to encourage them to take better care of their homes and the buildings in which they were located. Landlords had a bad reputation in Paris in the period after World War II, when they were held responsible for the gradual degradation of the built environment in the city. Very often they were seen as profit-seekers looking to delay any investment in or repair to their buildings until they were absolutely necessary. By granting the inhabitants of a building ownership and allowing them to make decisions for the building as a group and community—known as the *copropriété*—the

² For a thorough introduction to the scholarship on gentrification, see Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

government expected to create incentives for private owners to invest and to improve the buildings throughout Paris and the rest of France.

Homeownership was seen as a solution not only to increase residents' participation in local affairs, but also to increase French savings and investment. According to those promoting the growth of the real estate industry, *copropriété* gave many more people in France the ability to invest their money securely, rather than in more volatile opportunities like the stock market.³ The French state acted decisively to subsidize individuals to help them secure the necessary financing to purchase their homes and rental properties.

But the economics of homeownership were much more volatile than advertised by the government because the French real estate markets and the culture of purchasing homes had become highly speculative. Beginning in the 1970s, the culture of purchasing apartments became more public and part of everyday life. The rise in the number of local real estate agencies on the street was staggering. There are currently dozens of real estate agencies operating in Paris that offer apartments in the Faubourg Saint-Denis and many of them have offices on the neighborhood's streets.

Apartments for sale have become the most recent addition to individuals' daily shopping rituals in their neighborhoods. One finds people window-shopping for apartments as frequently as they do clothes, crowded around the advertisements that cover the front windows of real estate agencies from top to bottom. It is difficult to avoid the game—walking through Paris guarantees that one will pass photos, advertisements, and prices for apartments. As more and more Parisians go through the process of buying a home, thereby joining the club of homeowners, this culture of apartment shopping and of examining the city's housing market on a frequent basis will continue to grow.

Although the increase in homeownership in the Faubourg Saint-Denis since 1958 had been steady and gradual into the 1990s, the sudden rise in real estate prices in 1998 changed the stakes of apartment acquisition in the neighborhood. While real estate prices had had their ups and downs, they were not a consistently good financial investment, often returning below-market rates for investors. A 20 percent tax levied on all real estate transactions on top of regular taxes prevented these investments from becoming an attractive commodity.⁴ It deterred speculators and also developers, who would only profit on their investments if the value of their property increased dramatically. The government had hoped that the tax would deter speculation and leave the realm of housing as a venue of long-term investment.

In 1998, the government changed its mind and allowed real estate to become, essentially, a freely traded commodity. It lowered the 20 percent tax on all transactions to 5 percent,

³ See Patrice Bazin, "Preface" in *L'industrie du logement : Evolution, perspectives, et politiques*. Paris: Publications Administrer, 1991. 5. Bazin was then president of the CNAB, the largest *syndic* (the companies hired by every *copropriété* to take care of administrative tasks) in France.

⁴ These insights into real estate in Paris in its moment of transformation in 1998 came from a discussion with Donald Wolf, a real estate investor based in Paris. Donald Wolf, "Interview with Donald Wolf, February 11, 2009," In person, February 11, 2009.

significantly reducing transaction costs for investors.⁵ Housing prices for older buildings in Paris began to rise steadily and rapidly, driven by buyers' easy-to-access credit from banks and the culmination of the long-growing desire of middle-class Parisians to live in the city center. In the seven years between 1998 and 2004, the average apartment in Paris more than doubled in value.⁶ Although this price increase occurred nationally—the average housing unit in France increased in value by almost 90 percent during the same period—Paris outpaced the rest of the country.⁷ This increase continued unabated in Paris, surpassing national growth in 2007, until the steep decline of financial markets in 2008, at which time prices for apartments in the city had almost tripled their 1998 values.⁸ By the summer of 2011, prices had recovered and again reached historic highs in Paris.⁹ New owners of these apartments were not only subject to increased monthly costs for their apartments but also had more to lose if prices fell.

Most importantly, new residents were paying a significantly higher percentage of their income for their homes. Between 1998 and 2012, the cost of Parisian apartments relative to the average per capita household income in France almost quadrupled.¹⁰ This meant that in 2012 for the average new arrival to an apartment, whether homeowner or tenant, housing costs would take up almost four times the amount of their monthly budget than it would have fifteen years before. Not surprisingly, many new homeowners could not afford this reduction in their monthly spending, so they took on more debt from banks that were eager to finance more home purchases. During this fifteen-year period, the average homeowner household in France increased the share of its disposable income used to pay its mortgage from just over 30 percent to 65 percent.¹¹ This staggering increase meant that new homeowners were much more at risk to fluctuations in housing prices than to other changes in their economic situation.

These figures make it clear that homeowners, more than ever before, have greater incentive to act to prevent any decrease in housing prices. In addition, the past fifteen years of housing price growth has often made apartment buyers greedy, as many have come to expect to profit the same way others have from rising prices. Not surprisingly, their fears of price drops

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The average price increased by 103 percent according to an INSEE report. Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, *Les indices Notaires-INSEE de prix des logements anciens: version 2 des modèles hédoniques*, INSEE méthodes n° 111 (Paris: INSEE, 2005), 134.

⁷ Ibid., 133.

⁸ Jacques Friggit, "De Philippe Auguste à François Hollande, le prix des logements à Paris sur huit siècles," *Variances, revue de l'association des anciens élèves de l'Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique*, no. 45 (September 2012), <http://www.cgedd.fr/auguste-hollande-prix-immobilier-paris.pdf>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ This rate—a 260 percent increase—was also considerably higher than the national increase, which was approximately 188 percent. In 1998, Parisian and national rates for housing prices relative to per capita income were equal. Ibid. For more on the rise in real estate values in Paris and their effects on residents, see Adrien de Tricornot, "A Paris, les prix sont tellement extravagants que les vrais résidents sont exclus du marché," *Le Monde* (Paris, March 8, 2011).

¹¹ Friggit, "De Philippe Auguste à François Hollande, le prix des logements à Paris sur huit siècles."

have pushed them to use their powers as taxpayers and municipal voters to change their neighborhoods and streets in order to increase property values.

It has not only been residents who have sought to influence property values in the city. In 1997, the Hôtel de Ville had a budget of almost 29 billion francs, larger than most ministries in the French government.¹² The city spent 2.75 billion francs annually—10 percent of its budget—on land acquisition and real estate developments. The latter number was understated, because the city was able to invest in property and its development through other extra-budget entities devoted to social housing and other forms of real estate.¹³ Although the city had lost a large amount of money—almost 1.5 billion francs—from the crash in real estate prices from 1992 to 1997, it continued to invest heavily in real estate in the years to follow, profiting enormously from the rise in prices from 1997 through 2012.¹⁴ It also frequently used its legal right of pre-emption, created in 1986, to intercede in all real estate sales in the city.¹⁵ It had a three-month period after the finalization of every real estate sale to examine the property and decide, as part of a social housing or a neighborhood improvement initiative, if it would block the sale and offer a higher price. These initiatives were often undertaken by the Hôtel de Ville along with the Mairies of arrondissements to create more social housing. Christophe Bonneuil, an elected councilor in the 10th arrondissement from the Green Party who was in charge of local democracy initiatives, stated that his first priority was “to pursue a policy of pre-emption to increase the number of social housing units [in the 10th arrondissement].”¹⁶ This act of intervention to purchase apartments at above-market value and then to rent them at below-market rates boosted overall prices in the real estate market.

The Hôtel de Ville had other incentives to keep housing prices elevated. City tax collections were mostly tied to real estate values.¹⁷ The Hôtel de Ville earned not only from the increased values of its investments, but also from increased tax revenue tied to real estate prices: the *taxe professionnelle* (the replacement for the *taxe patente* levied on businesses, at 6.5 billion francs in 1999), the *taxe d’habitation* (the replacement for the *taxe mobilière* levied on residents, at 2.8 billion francs), and the *taxe foncière* (levied on landowners, at 2.4 billion francs).¹⁸ By working to keep its tax revenue-tied budget growing, the Hôtel de Ville had an important incentive to increase property values. It was and remains caught in a bind between helping lower-

¹² Frédéric Vasseur, *Que sais-je ? La mairie de Paris* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 3,15.

¹³ The state generally offered low-interest loans to these public-private partnerships controlled by the Hôtel de Ville to allow them to build cheaply. *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁵ For the legislation that granted municipalities across France the right of pre-emption, see “Décret no. 86-516 du 14 mars 1986,” *Journal officiel de la République Française* (March 16, 1986): 4382–4388; “Décret no. 87-284 du 22 avril 1987,” *Journal officiel de la République Française* (April 25, 1987): 4672–4673.

¹⁶ Judith Vaillhé, “Christophe Bonneuil, élu ‘Vert’ du 10e répond aux questions de Dix et demi,” *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, December 2001.

¹⁷ Vasseur, *Que sais-je ? La mairie de Paris*, 19–20.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

and middle-class Parisians gain access to affordable housing and keeping its budget and those of the city's many homeowners from decreasing. The Hôtel de Ville has chosen the middle ground, offering more social housing and, in the process, increasing market prices for housing across the board.

As this new group of gentrifying residents moved to the Faubourg Saint-Denis, it began to use the institutions of municipal democracy created during decentralization in the 1980s to support its interests. The rise of associations and groups of residents came to dominate local politics in the 10th arrondissement. Resident-citizens attached great importance to urban issues, their stakes, and the solutions proposed by the local government, holding elected officials accountable when they voted.¹⁹ Never before in Paris or France had citizens had such influence over local government. Consequently, many citizens began to use this power to pressure their municipality to shape its urban space.²⁰ They had been taught—through local elections, an increased number of questionnaires and polls conducted at the local level, government advertising, and the constant discussion of transparency in municipal government—to demand results from their local government.²¹

Their stakes were greater, too, as more of these citizens in Paris were property owners. They not only had increased political interest in local affairs but also increased economic interest, as many of these residents carried significant mortgages and had a lot to lose if property values in their neighborhood began to drop.

Unlike the ground-up mobilization and protests of the 1960s and 1970s in Paris regarding issues tied to urban planning and neighborhoods, the period of the 1990s up until 2012 was marked by intervention led by associations, groups, and councils tied to or funded by municipal administrations, such as the *conseils d'arrondissement* and *conseils de quartier*.²² The law of February 1992 on territorial administration promoted the creation of neighborhood-based committees to deal with different types of local issues, such as schools, day-care centers, zoning laws, and other political issues.²³

Pressure grew to define the neighborhood, not the arrondissement (or district in other cities in France), as the jurisdiction for local politics in the late 1970s. The CARNACQ, the

¹⁹ Hoffman-Martinot, Vincent, "Les grandes villes françaises : une démocratie en souffrance," in *Démocraties urbaines: l'état de la démocratie dans les grandes villes de 12 pays industrialisés*, ed. Oscar W. Gabriel and Vincent Hoffmann-Martinot (Editions L'Harmattan, 1999), 120.

²⁰ For an excellent introduction to the effects of local democracy in France, see the edited volume: Catherine Neveu, ed., *Espace public et engagement politique : enjeux et logiques de la citoyenneté locale* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1999).

²¹ Loïc Blondiaux, Gérard Marcou, and François Rangeon, "Présentation," in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 8.

²² Georges Gontcharoff, "Le renouveau des comités de quartier," in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 306–307.

²³ *Ibid.*, 311.

Carrefour national des associations d'habitants et des comités des quartiers (or the National Forum for Resident Associations and Neighborhood Committees), was created in 1976 by the unions of *comités de quartiers* from Paris, Lyon, Marseille, and Grenoble to lobby the French government to promote democracy at the level of the neighborhood.²⁴ By the end of the decade, other French cities had joined the group and other similar organizations had been organized in the United States and in Canada, with the most influential in Montreal and Winnipeg.²⁵

The principal role of these *comités* or *conseils de quartier* was to allow citizens speak and have their opinions—generally grievances—heard by elected officials.²⁶ In 1996, 70 percent of the presidents of *conseils de quartier* suggested that the objective of their council was to “allow residents to speak,” while only 10 percent suggested it should be to act in opposition to the local government.²⁷ Consequently, as observed by François Rangeon, the number of these committees throughout France that acted in opposition to municipal elected officials was marginal.²⁸ “The majority of *comités de quartier*,” he stated, “prefer to restrict themselves to a role complementing representative democracy, thereby themselves creating limits to their contribution to the development of local democracy.”²⁹

At the heart of this project was the idea of the *quartier*, or neighborhood. The neighborhood was often viewed as an ideal place that existed to make residents’ lives complete. Every neighborhood had to have all of the necessary components of city life—schools, bakeries, wine shops, grocery stores, bus and metro connections, dry cleaners, butchers, and any other business deemed important to the lives of its residents.³⁰ But beyond a retail marketplace on the street, residents desired a certain type of comportment—a style—of life on the street. The aggressiveness and messiness of a crowded, urban market was undesirable. The *conseils de quartier*, in many parts of Paris, were the instrument residents used to realize these ideal neighborhoods.

Inaugural meetings of the *conseils de quartier* in the 10th arrondissement were held at the end of 2001, the first of which was for the Château-d’Eau/Lancry neighborhood, located just to the east of the Boulevard de Strasbourg, including part of the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood around the Château-d’Eau metro station.³¹ Ever increasingly since their establishment, the *conseils de quartier* have been used as vehicles for residents to create their ideal

²⁴ François Rangeon, “Les comités de quartier, instruments de démocratie locale ?,” in *La démocratie locale: représentation, participation et espace public* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 333–334.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 336.

²⁷ Survey conducted at the 20th *congrès du CARNACQ* in Amiens, October 1996. Cited in *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 338.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ For the growing understanding that an authentic, desired neighborhood in Paris is defined by a diversity of food shops, see the views expressed in Elaine Sciolino, “On a Street Filled With History, One That Got Away,” *The New York Times*, November 5, 2012, sec. Dining & Wine. The article discusses the protests over the disappearance of a fishmonger on the rue des Martyrs in the 9th arrondissement.

³¹ Jean Parisot, “Les Conseils de Quartier se mettent au travail,” *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, December 2001.

version of public space in their neighborhoods. This was clearly stated in the seven future initiatives planned for the neighborhood by the Château-d'Eau/Lancry *conseil de quartier* held on October 17, 2012:

- Shops
- Beautification, greening, development
- Nuisances from the *terrasses* of cafés and shops
- Cleanliness and upkeep
- Security and tranquility
- Solidarity and coexistence
- Streets: traffic and parking³²

All of their proposed projects involved controlling or shaping how the public space of the neighborhood is used. They wanted to use their political power to beautify and clean the streets of the neighborhood, make its spaces greener, safer, empty of cars, and quieter without the “nuisances” emanating from the people talking and smoking outside of shops and cafés. This is a suburban, hygienic vision of public space that residents wanted to apply to streets that were unquestionably urban and chaotic on the ground.

Pieces of this vision have been promoted at various points throughout the history of Paris. After the massive cholera outbreak in 1832, the government began its push to reduce crowding and filth while increasing the amount of open space in the city by widening roads.³³ This vision triumphed under Haussmann’s rebuilding of the city in the 1850s and 1860s, with the intent of replacing the older, narrow, dirty streets of Paris with the wide and spacious Grands Boulevards and other modern, clean, and secure roads. The greening of Paris also accelerated during this period with the building and remaking of the city’s great parks—Buttes-Chaumont, Monceau, and Montsouris—and forests, the Bois de Vincennes and Bois de Boulogne. During the nineteenth century, as in the twenty-first, the people who had influence in shaping the development of the city desired its streets to be beautified and its spaces less urban.³⁴

³² “Compte-rendu du Conseil de quartier « Château-d’Eau - Lancry » du 17 octobre 2012”, October 17, 2012.

³³ See François Delaporte, *Disease and Civilization: The Cholera in Paris, 1832*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989).

³⁴ For studies on culture and science together working to transform urban planning and streets at different moments in Paris’s history, see Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); David S. Barnes, *The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-Century Struggle Against Filth and Germs* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

In interviews, many residents who have moved to the neighborhood since the late 1990s have described similar paths that have led them to the Faubourg Saint-Denis.³⁵ Most moved to the neighborhood at some point in their twenties or thirties and did not know it well before they came. Most had already been living in other parts of Paris. They came primarily for its affordable apartments, centrality, and ease of access to all of the city's forms of public transportation. For most, the neighborhood itself came second to the quality and price of the specific apartments they chose, relative to others in different central and affordable neighborhoods.³⁶ They liked the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the neighborhood, its food shops, ethnic restaurants, and the feel of its streets, with their pre-Haussmannian buildings and charming, secluded courtyards where one could forget the busy street that lay outside. They considered these characteristics of the neighborhood to be a significant benefit to living there.

Mr. O.P. moved to the Faubourg Saint-Denis—or Strasbourg Saint-Denis, as he called it—in 1998 as a renter when he was in his mid-twenties.³⁷ His building, on the rue de l'Echiquier, had been half-empty and was a good deal at the time. He chose the neighborhood as the starting point for his apartment search because it had been the cheapest centrally located neighborhood in Paris at the time.³⁸

³⁵ In this chapter, I do not claim to have performed a full ethnographic study of the diverse residents, quotidian, and others who less frequently use the spaces of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. As Mitchell Duneier notes in his article “How Not to Lie with Ethnography,” most ethnographies involve the author making suppositions about his subject based on the people he or she meets through his first contacts in a group, often neglecting entire other parts of the group. My results are biased as such, though I have, in my seven years of spending time in and exploring the Faubourg Saint-Denis, met a wide variety of people who approach the neighborhood differently. People from certain communities have been harder to approach, especially Kurds, who are often reticent to talk to an American when many belong to the PKK, the Kurdish independence party classified as a terrorist group by the United States' government. While I have surely not found individuals and important groups of people in this complex neighborhood, I have tried my best to understand the diversity of opinions and ways people have come to use the Faubourg Saint-Denis's spaces. See Mitchell Duneier, “How Not to Lie with Ethnography,” *Sociological Methodology* 41, no. 1 (2011): 1–11.

³⁶ This matches the observations of Sabine Chalvon-Demersay in her study in the early 1980s of a small neighborhood, the “triangle” of the 14th arrondissement, centered on the rue Daguerre. Her subjects, unlike most new residents in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, had just moved to Paris from the suburbs and elsewhere in France. Their most important considerations in choosing a home were that it was in Paris proper and that the apartment was agreeable. Neighborhood was a secondary factor, but important enough to veto people's apartment choice if they did not like it enough. Sabine Chalvon-Demersay, *Le triangle du XIVe : Des nouveaux habitants dans un vieux quartier de Paris* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1984).

³⁷ For O.P., Strasbourg Saint-Denis is a neighborhood between the borders of the rue d'Hauteville, Boulevard Saint-Denis, Boulevard de Strasbourg, and the rue de Paradis. His definition is slightly smaller than the one I normally use for the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but is more or less contiguous. Mr. J.S. and Mr. O.P., “Interview with Mr. J.S. and Mr. O.P., October 8, 2009,” In person, October 8, 2009.

³⁸ In November 1996, three-to-four room apartments, averaging 1,200 square feet, on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis varied between 5,380 and 6,700F per month to rent (the equivalent of 800 to 1,000 euros). “La clé : La sélection immobilière de votre quartier (9e-10e-18e arrondissement)”, November 20, 1996, 4. Two apartments of a similar size listed for sale in February 1997 on the rue des Petites-Ecuries, were both offered for 900,000F

O.P., like many others, remembers the late 1990s as a period of drug problems—drug users used the building’s staircases to deal and to shoot up heroin. A few years later, as he told it, the owner of the entire building chose to sell its apartments to their renters. They all purchased at once and created a *copropriété* for the building, which soon included new residents who acquired the empty spaces in the building. This marked the beginning of better times, he said, and from this point on, all of the building’s residents were also homeowners.

Most of the homeowners still remained in the building in 2009 and all knew each other well. Part of the reason the residents of the building have become close to each other is their common background. Most are artists and O.P., himself, called all of them *bobos*, short for *bourgeois bohèmes*, or as one dictionary translates the term: “high-achieving professionals who combine a wealthy lifestyle with an anti-establishment attitude and a concern for quality of life.”³⁹ Their shared interest in art, for example, inspired the building to organize an annual open-house event where all the residents display their own and their friends’ artwork in their apartments. They share food and wine and move in groups throughout the building during the day to share their art with their neighbors. They have a community within their building, a rarity in this neighborhood as well as in most of Paris.

In 2009, none of the building’s residents had children. The *copropriété* did not want babies in their building and forbade, in its regulations, the common Parisian practice of storing strollers in common areas, either at the bottom of staircases or in hallways. On one hand, the residents wanted the building to remain quiet, without crying babies in the middle of the night, and on the other, residents wanted to be able to throw parties on weekend nights without complaints from parents with sleeping children. O.P. did not see this to be a problem, since he would not want to live in the area if he had children because he said that “there is nothing in the neighborhood for kids.” Mr. J.S., a friend of his, agreed. He lived in the 6th arrondissement with children and could not imagine living in an area without parks in which they could play. For both of them, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was a great neighborhood for adults.

O.P. said that he very much liked living in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. He “love[d] walking down the street and having three supermarkets, fresh produce shops that are really cheap, and a few great cafés 30 seconds away from home.”⁴⁰ Although he did not eat out much, he enjoys eating Indian food and likes to try all of the different restaurants in the neighborhood.⁴¹ As a

(approximately 135,000 euros). “La clé: La sélection immobilière de votre quartier (9e-10e-18e arrondissement)”, February 11, 1997. While rental prices in 2012 have doubled or tripled since 1997, apartments for sale have increased eightfold or more. Purchasing an apartment in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1997 was a much better deal than renting in comparison to 2012.

³⁹ “Bobo - Traduction - Dictionnaire Français-Anglais WordReference.com”, n.d., <http://www.wordreference.com/fren/bobo>.

⁴⁰ J.S. and O.P., “Interview with Mr. J.S. and Mr. O.P., October 8, 2009.”

⁴¹ Like most residents in the neighborhood, O.P. did not know that the majority of the restaurants advertising themselves as Indian were in fact run by Pakistanis. Most of the residents I have met have not gotten to know shopkeepers in the neighborhood beyond pleasantries.

photographer, he spent a considerable amount of time working at home and therefore was often a daytime user of the neighborhood. He also frequently visited cafés in the neighborhood,

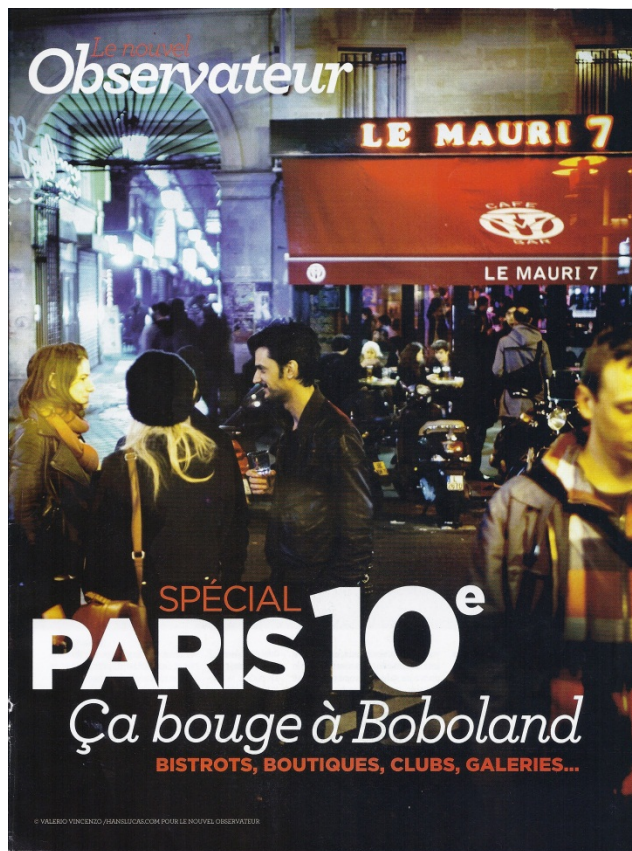


Figure 2. The cover of *Le Nouvel Observateur*'s March 15, 2012 special issue on the trendy new bars, shops, galleries, and restaurants in the 10th arrondissement. The photo is taken from the front door of Chez Jeannette looking toward the entrance to the Passage Brady.

including the trendy Chez Jeannette at 47 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis (see Figure 2).⁴² For O.P., the ideal city in the world was Berlin because its people are “creative,” its buildings are beautiful, and it is “so cheap and easy to live in it.”⁴³ He believed that the Faubourg Saint-Denis was the neighborhood in Paris most like Berlin and, in these respects, also most like his favorite neighborhoods in New York, the East Village and the Lower East Side. It is for that reason that O.P. would not leave the neighborhood, even if he had the means to buy an apartment elsewhere in Paris. The only thing that could convince him to leave would be an affordable apartment with a view of the Canal Saint-Martin. In that case, he would be just a ten minute walk from the Faubourg Saint-Denis but would be living in the most beautiful part of the 10th arrondissement with its trendier shops and restaurants.

Marie Desplechin, a writer living on the rue d’Hauteville since the early 1990s, succinctly explained in 2012 that she loved the neighborhood, like O.P., because “the

⁴² Chez Jeannette had been a café for everyone in the neighborhood—workers, residents, artists, shopkeepers—and was trendy in its own way before it was bought and brightened up by a younger ownership in 2007. Beforehand, it had been run by a few people in their sixties and seventies and was much more run-down and non-descript, except for its old-fashioned neon lights behind the bar. Since its change, especially between 2007 and 2010, its customers were so numerous and from all over Paris that they filled the street every night, blocking traffic and annoying mayors (I witnessed complaints against the café at the September 15, 2009 Porte Saint-Denis/Paradis *conseil de quartier* meeting). Le Mauri 7, the café across the street (pictured in Figure 2), had been a dreary café run by and for middle-aged Albanian men but started to become popular because customers coming to Chez Jeannette could not get in the door due to the crowds and chose instead to move across the street. Le Mauri 7 has since rebranded and is now a trendy bar in its own right.

⁴³ J.S. and O.P., “Interview with Mr. J.S. and Mr. O.P., October 8, 2009.”

ideal in the city is here.”⁴⁴ Beyond having so many accessible cafés, restaurants, and shops, Desplechin first mentioned how she felt part of a warm community out on the neighborhood’s streets. She continued to say “the shopkeepers in the neighborhood are very kind, they know everyone—parents, children—and always ask how you are doing.”⁴⁵ To illustrate this, she explained that earlier in the day the florist had given her daughter a free lily. She also stressed the diversity of the neighborhood—there were children of 35 different nationalities in her son’s school on the rue Martel. She was worried, however, that “the social equilibrium [of the neighborhood] is disappearing with the [rise] in housing prices.”⁴⁶ For Desplechin, the municipal government was obligated to act in order to preserve the neighborhood: “It is truly necessary that the Mairie continues to invest in social housing and tries to maintain the variety of shops. Everyone here can eat, expensively or cheaply.” She was afraid that the “Montorgueil syndrome” would infect her neighborhood. On the rue de Montorgeuil, a market street quite similar to the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis before the 1990s, fancy food shops placed on a newly pedestrianized street in the 2nd arrondissement near Les Halles crowded out the cheaper shops, which were often less pretentious and with fewer commercial aspirations.⁴⁷

Even though both O.P. and J.S. saw the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a changed neighborhood in 2009, neither could imagine it losing those smaller shops and the immigrants who often ran them. When asked why, they responded that the shops and their managers were an indelible part of the neighborhood’s character. Even with the arrival of trendy cafés and restaurants, as well as the effects of increased prices for retail spaces, it would be hard for O.P. and J.S. to imagine the neighborhood otherwise.

In 2012, the retail businesses on the street have remained relatively stable. While some have come and gone since the 1990s, the types of businesses, for the most part, have not. The only significant addition to the neighborhood has been the rapid growth of the black hair styling industry.⁴⁸ Looking even farther back in the history of retail shops on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, there has been remarkable consistency.⁴⁹ In the 1959 Bottin, the Paris business directory, 170 businesses were listed in the neighborhood. In 2009, 59 of these businesses, or 35 percent,

⁴⁴ Anne Sogno Fiore, “Rencontre avec Marie Desplechin : Vivre et laisser vivre,” *Le Nouvel Observateur*, March 15, 2012.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ I call it “black” hair styling, because that is the word the locals use in French—they say *black*, with a French accent, not *noir*. One cannot refer to it as French-African hair styling, because not all the people who come to get their hair done are African. Some come from Haiti, others from the Antilles, including Guadeloupe and Martinique. *Black* has come to define the hair of all of these diverse people and does not refer to their skin color. Unlike most people who do not appear to be black, I have often been considered a possible customer by the hawkers working for the salons, as during certain points during my research I have had an afro. While most people at Château-d’Eau would not think I was black, I do have “black” hair. It is this type of hair—very curly and nappy—in which these salons specialize.

⁴⁹ Bottin, 1959. *Paris: liste, rues, Seine* (Paris: Société Didot-Bottin, 1959).

remained in the same business, selling the same products as in 1959.⁵⁰ Of these, 22, or 13 percent, maintained the same name of their establishment. Over a fifty year period with such significant changes to retail and non-retail businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, this consistency is remarkable.

Most of the storefronts that continue in the same line of work are restaurants, bars, and cafés. Nineteen of the 24 restaurants, cafés, and bars on the street in 1959—just under 80 percent— remained open, in some form, in 2009. While two cafés had become Pakistani-Indian restaurants (owned by Pakistanis and advertised as serving more commercially viable Indian cuisine), the rest remained ethnically unidentifiable Parisian cafés or French bistros.⁵¹ These businesses have continued to be profitable as they have not been subject to a downturn from technological changes or from the growth of large-scale distribution as food vendors and grocery stores have.⁵² They also serve as testimony to the continued importance of socializing on the street. It remains enough a hub to keep these nineteen businesses and approximately forty newer food and drink establishments open for business. The neighborhood's public space, in its replacement of food vendors with restaurants, bars, and cafés, has become more dedicated to socializing.

It has even kept some of its market atmosphere. In the Passage Brady, for example, filled with Indian and Pakistani restaurants by the early 1980s, walking through the center aisle of the *passage* is much like walking through a market. As in many tourist areas in modern cities, a

⁵⁰ In September 2012, Google Street View, a service that allows one to see photos of streets, contained images of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis from May 2008 north of the rue du Château-d'Eau, from February 2009 between the rue d'Enghien and the rue du Château d'Eau, and from August 2008 between the Porte Saint-Denis and the rue d'Enghien. By comparing these visual records to the Bottin records from 1960, one can begin to see the changes in the neighborhood's retail businesses. See *Ibid.*; "Google Street View, Rue Du Faubourg Saint-Denis", 2009, <https://maps.google.com/maps?q=6+Rue+du+Faubourg-Saint-Denis,+Paris,+France&layer=c&z=17&iwloc=A&sll=48.870119,2.352981&cbp=13,79.3,0,0,0&cbll=48.870101,2.352835&hl=en&ved=0CAoQ2wU&sa=X&ei=-p6aUKSWKsm0iQaawIDwBw>.

⁵¹ Most ethnic restaurants that opened on the street moved into storefront spaces previously devoted to other types of business that closed down during the 1970s and 1980s because these spaces were empty and therefore often cheaper. That is why the *passages* of the neighborhood, all of which had been left empty from the departure of small clothing businesses, ended up housing the majority of ethnic restaurants in the neighborhood.

⁵² Of the nineteen *épiceries* and *primeurs* (produce shops) on the street in 1959, only eight continued to sell similar types of products. Two of the eight shops became ethnic food specialty shops—Ronalba selling Central and Eastern European foods at 58 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and Günes offering Turkish products at number 74. The rest changed into other types of businesses—a Turkish fast-food kebab seller, a Turkish butcher, a Chinese-run wholesale sewing supplies shop, and a travel agency, among others. All of the seven *crémeries* on the street, though, closed down to become various types of businesses in 2009: three grocery stores (one Pakistani), a cheese and wine shop, a Kurdish sandwich shop, a government-run center for child protection, and a florist. Six of the 27 meat and fish sellers on the street remained fifty years later and most of the other shops, too, turned into a variety of ethnic restaurants, call shops (vendors of prepaid cellular telephone cards who also provide long-distance calling and internet access), and an Afro-Antillean record store. See *Bottin, 1959. Paris: liste, rues, Seine*; "Google Street View, Rue Du Faubourg Saint-Denis."

passerby will be approached by an employee of each restaurant, asking if he would like to come inside to try their food, much as a vendor in a market would try to attract customers to their stall. The *passages*, even though they are now mainly filled with restaurants and barber shops, not clothing or food vendors, remain a social marketplace where visitors have to listen and speak to the shopkeepers there.

Nonetheless, residents are aware of the changing character of the neighborhood's streets. It is challenging for residents to understand the complexities of these transformations because they are caused by many factors outside of the experiences—challenges to shopkeepers' business models, changing retail rental prices, increased costs to employing residents. Most residents, like Marie Desplechin, are worried that they may lose certain shops because of rising prices and the arrival of more and more trendy businesses. They often look to the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement to step in, as Desplechin suggested, to "maintain the variety of shops."⁵³ Some, like O.P. and J.S., are less worried about change because they have gotten used to a diverse Faubourg Saint-Denis and cannot imagine that the shops and restaurants that define the character of the neighborhood would gradually disappear.

Shopkeepers, too, even though they understand the economics of running a retail business better, also have trouble predicting how the neighborhood will evolve. Beginning at the end of the year in 2001, shopkeepers of all types complained that the "massive arrival of *Bobos*" would threaten the future of their businesses.⁵⁴ Others recognized the changing demographics of the neighborhood as a chance to recruit new customers. Mustafa Dinç, an employee of the Turkish bakery and grocery store, Günes, at 74 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, remarked in a television interview in 1992 that "the French people who come here are people who have already been in Turkey, and they've already tasted all of these things there. They want to find the same flavors here. [Our bread is] a change from the baguette."⁵⁵ Many newcomers and longtime residents, for example, had been shopping at the variety of international food shops and restaurants in the neighborhood since they opened in the 1970s and 1980s. Even though the majority of their clients have been from their own communities, these shops have always received considerable business from other customers who live or spend time in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Günes closed in 2012. Many residents protested its closure because it had become one of the mainstays of their neighborhood and, in response, petitioned the Mairie to keep it open.⁵⁶ Residents are beginning to feel that their neighborhood is changing negatively and losing some of

⁵³ Sogno Fiore, "Rencontre avec Marie Desplechin : Vivre et laisser vivre."

⁵⁴ "Rue du fbg-St-Denis, La grogne gagne chez les commerçants," *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, April 2002.

⁵⁵ Abdellah Ouahhabi, "Emission Islamique : Connaître l'Islam," TV Broadcast (Paris: France 2, September 20, 1992), Institut national de l'audiovisuel.

⁵⁶ Mme N.T., "Interview with Mme N.T., September 6, 2012," In person, September 6, 2012. This appeal to the Mairie is similar to that used by residents in the 9th arrondissement to stop their loss of the fishmonger on the rue des Martyrs. Neither was successful. Sciolino, "On a Street Filled With History, One That Got Away."

the diversity of people and businesses that they have come to take for granted. To understand these transformations to retail businesses and the character of the neighborhood in general, one must examine the quotidian of the neighborhood, who are the majority of the customers of these shops, and explore why they come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis and how their habits and use of the neighborhood have changed in recent years.

As in 1960, the majority of the neighborhood's quodians came to it from considerable distances every day. Their trajectories have followed those of the people of the Paris region—with the massive expansion of the suburban population, the majority of the Faubourg Saint-Denis's quodians now come to the neighborhood from the suburbs. Some continue to come from other parts of Paris, especially employees of the creative industries that have moved into the Faubourg Saint-Denis in recent years. They generally come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis for work, at least to start, but even after they leave jobs in the neighborhood, they often continue to come back years later because it has become the site of many of their important social relationships.

Mr. A., a 35 year-old manager of a barber shop in the Passage du Prado, had been working in the neighborhood for a number of years when interviewed in the summer of 2009.⁵⁷ Matt Goldberg, a friend of mine, was having his beard trimmed by one of A.'s employees, a recent Kurdish immigrant who did not speak any French or English. A., on the other hand, was a Pakistani national who spoke fluent French, English, Urdu, and some Turkish. He had moved to France fifteen years earlier for work, though he did not have high aspirations. Most Pakistanis, he said, liked to come to France for Ph.D. programs, but as he did not have more than "basic schooling," he had worked menial jobs in Paris for a number of years until he ended up learning to be a barber. A. tried to return to his hometown, Lahore, the capital of the Punjab region on the border with India, once every other year. At the time he was interviewed, he was residing in the northern suburbs of Paris. He commuted to the Faubourg Saint-Denis every day except Sunday for his work—on Sundays, the barber shop, as were most businesses in the Passage du Prado, was closed. Like most quodians in the neighborhood, he worked with people of different backgrounds, and spoke a number of different languages. When he had free time, he played pick-up cricket near the Porte de Pantin in the 19th arrondissement, although he did not get a chance to go frequently because he was too busy working.

Hardworking shopkeepers, like A., tend to know a large number of people, yet do not socialize much outside of work beyond getting a quick coffee, tea, or drink with others in the neighborhood. Mr. K., the manager of Mardin Çorba Salonu, a small, standing-room only Kurdish soup restaurant at 19 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, did not have enough time or extra

⁵⁷ Mr. A., "Interview with Mr. A., July 1, 2009," In person, July 1, 2009.

money to go out in the neighborhood.⁵⁸ Even though he did not have an apartment in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, he often slept there in his car on Friday and Saturday nights from two to four in the morning. Without a special license, he was obligated to close the business during those hours in the dead of the night. He would reopen the restaurant at four o'clock to serve lentil, chicken, and tripe soups to customers who were returning from the clubs on the Grands Boulevards. K. rented a parking space at a nearby garage for 100 euros per month, but would gladly live in the neighborhood rather than in Bobigny, a suburb to the east of Paris, just to avoid the commute, which costs him thirty minutes of time each way every day. To rent a shabby studio in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, however, would have cost him at least 600 euros a month. Even with the costs of a car, car insurance, and parking, he said that living in Bobigny saved him over 100 euros a month, which made all the difference to him.

For both Mr. K. and Mr. A., their regular customers came from other parts of Paris and the region. The Turks, Kurds, and Pakistanis who came to work in the Faubourg Saint-Denis and in the Sentier usually lived elsewhere in the Paris region.⁵⁹ “No one who comes often [to Mardin] lives in the neighborhood. Everyone comes from the suburbs,” K. said one evening.⁶⁰ For him, his regular customers were fellow Kurds and Turks, most of whom came to the neighborhood for their own work or to participate in their communities’ social life in the neighborhood. While there was a period before 2005, he said, when some of his Kurdish customers lived in the neighborhood, they have all since left for more affordable places in the suburbs. Mr. A. did not receive many French customers who lived in the neighborhood, he said. Most French people did not like to come inside the Passage du Prado because they found it uncomfortable and unsafe.⁶¹ His haircuts were surely not too expensive for residents in the neighborhood—they may have even been too cheap at six euros to convince potential customers of their quality. And although neither Mr. A. nor Mr. K. said it explicitly, all of their regular customers were *men* from the suburbs.

The men of these communities use the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a social space as much as a place to find work. Beyond the retail jobs—barbers, grocery stores, music shops, cafés and restaurants—in the neighborhood, a number of men from these ethnic groups work in temporary jobs in the garment, construction, and other industries, as people have for decades in

⁵⁸ The restaurant is named after the magnificent ancient city in the Kurdish-majority region of Turkey, lying on the country’s southern border with Syria. Mr. K., “Interview with Mr. K., January 28, 2010,” In person, January 28, 2010.

⁵⁹ Although this has been confirmed by almost all of my interviews in the neighborhood, I have seen it mentioned only once in scholarly literature. See Stéphane de Tapia, “Introduction,” in *Migrations turques dans un monde globalisé: le poids du local*, ed. Anne Yvonne Guillou, Stéphane de Tapia, and Pòleth M. Waddled (Rennes, France: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 25.

⁶⁰ K., “Interview with Mr. K., January 28, 2010.”

⁶¹ A., “Interview with Mr. A., July 1, 2009.” I observed the same phenomenon. Two friends of mine, G. and J., who both lived in the Faubourg Saint-Denis for over five years until 2011, had only entered one time just after they had moved to the neighborhood and chose never again to enter until I brought both of them, on separate occasions, to eat dinner at a Mauritian restaurant inside.

the Faubourg Saint-Denis. One building in a relatively poor state, 14 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, just beyond the Passage du Prado, has a courtyard dedicated to businesses run by and for Pakistanis. This includes some clothing manufacturing workshops, a clothing dyer, and two translation offices specializing in Urdu. There are a number of other courtyards with Turkish and Kurdish-run businesses, as well.

Keup Street, in Cologne, Germany, as described in 2007 by Ibrahim Sirkeci, seems to be a similar type of mixed Turkish-Kurdish hub, the center of Kurdish immigration in Germany.⁶² “Within [a] couple of hundred yards, Keup Street is a home to many Turkish convenience shops, restaurants, bakeries, kebab houses, barbers, travel agents, coffee houses, grocers, and mosques. For immigrants, Turks and Kurds alike, Keup Street and the surrounding area is a ‘homeland abroad.’”⁶³ Although the majority of Kurds left Turkey because of the military conflict there, the Kurdish experience in Germany was not one of antagonism with non-Kurdish Turks.⁶⁴ In fact, they benefited greatly not only in terms of insertion into local society, but also socially, from individuals’ personal relationships with Turks. Sarah Keeler, writing about Hackney in London, refers to the local, neighborhood identity as “Turkish-speaking,” tied to language and not to ethnic background.⁶⁵ Life on Keup Street and in Hackney, much like on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, has been one of mixing among Turks and Kurds, not of separation.

At the same time, however, both neighborhoods are filled with many different cafés where customers, often drinking tea and playing cards or backgammon, self-segregate by hometown, ethnic group, or political leanings.⁶⁶ Both neighborhoods contain a number of mosques and left-wing political organizations with social clubs. In the Faubourg Saint-Denis, three small mosques lay hidden from the street in the back of courtyards on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, each one welcoming people from a variety of backgrounds. The Kurdish Cultural Center on the rue d’Enghien in the old offices of the *Parisien Libéré* newspaper is also a very important site that has maintained the community hub for the Kurdish community in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. It is the European home for the PKK, the Kurdish Communist independence party seeking to create the state of Kurdistan under its jailed leader, Abdullah Öcalan. It serves at as a leisure center for young men in the community with a pool table and a small café, and also contains a large room housing a striking monument to its leaders jailed by

⁶² Ibrahim Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” in *Migrations Turques Dans Un Monde Globalisé: Le Poids Du Local*, ed. Anne Yvonne Guillou, Stéphane de Tapia, and Pôleth M. Wadbled (Rennes, France: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 180–181. For another case of a Turkish-Kurdish neighborhood, in the case Hackney in London, see Sarah Keeler, “Kurdish Community Organisations in North-East London,” in *Migrations Turques Dans Un Monde Globalisé: Le Poids Du Local*, ed. Anne Yvonne Guillou, Stéphane de Tapia, and Pôleth M. Wadbled (Rennes, France: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 69–89.

⁶³ Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” 181.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 179–181.

⁶⁵ Keeler, “Kurdish Community Organisations in North-East London,” 77–80.

⁶⁶ Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” 187.

the Turkish government, each pictured in a huge photograph surrounded by lavish frames. Unlike on Keup Street or in Hackney, women from the Turkish and Kurdish communities do not spend time in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

While there are women who are in the Faubourg Saint-Denis all day long—working in its shops, walking on its streets, hanging out at its cafés—the neighborhood’s public space has become more masculine since 1960. This change is due to various demographic, economic, and cultural shifts since that period. Many of the women who worked in the Faubourg Saint-Denis in the 1960s were elderly, a portion of the population who have largely left the urban workforce. One does not find older women selling vegetables anymore on the street out of a *quatre saisons* cart—they no longer exist—or in a supermarket or grocery store, as the women would be retired. At the same time, the waves of immigration from the 1970s to 1990s brought to the Faubourg Saint-Denis new groups of quotidians—especially Turks, Kurds, Yugoslavs, Greeks, and Pakistanis—who often make a distinct separation between the public social lives of men and of women. The numerous Turkish and Kurdish cafés in the neighborhood are spaces for men to drink tea and coffee, play cards, and pass their time. The home, in their cultures, is the social space for women. And as the homes of almost all of these men are in the suburbs, there is also a distinct geographical separation between the women of their communities and the male social and work center of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁶⁷ This, however, is not the case for either the African hairstyling industry—although the street outside of the hair salons is more of a male space and the interior of the salons more for women—or the newly implanted creative industries, both of which have many female employees who spend their days in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

The arrival of these new industries to the Faubourg Saint-Denis is crucial to the understanding of the new wave of more educated and wealthier quotidians who have recently begun to use its public space. Over 200,000 jobs (twelve percent of all jobs in Paris), mostly in industrial and manufacturing industries, were lost during the 1990s.⁶⁸ The 10th arrondissement lost over 15,000 jobs, some of which were the result of the closure of manufacturing businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁶⁹ In their place since 2000 have risen the studios of architecture, public relations, advertising, graphic design, music production, and new high-end clothing design companies. The buildings of the Faubourg Saint-Denis—while keeping a number of its clothing manufacturing businesses, almost all run by immigrants—have become filled with businesses in the service industry. Just as before, most of the people working in these businesses live outside of the neighborhood, even though many of them are paid well enough to afford to live in it. Much of the gentrification in the Faubourg Saint-Denis on its ground level, especially

⁶⁷ Many of the men from these communities who spend their days in the Faubourg Saint-Denis have also come to France alone, without their families. Although I do not have statistics, I would be surprised, especially for recent immigrants, if men did not significantly outnumber women from their respective communities in the Paris region, as it is the men who are more frequently sent by their families to earn money and send back remittances to their country of origin.

⁶⁸ Michel Pinçon and Monique Pinçon-Charlot, *Sociologie de Paris* (Paris: Editions La Découverte, 2004), 36.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

trendy cafés, bars, and restaurants, serves this population of quotidian, who eat lunch, dinner, and drink both coffee and alcohol frequently near their work.

Some people have suggested that the turning point in the neighborhood was the 1999 arrival of BETC-Europe BSCG, one of the most influential public relation firms in Europe, just across from the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin. According to Philippe Tricaud, the owner of Studio Bleu, the music practice studio on the rue des Petites-Ecuries, BETC's arrival opened up the neighborhood for many smaller firms and start-ups.⁷⁰ It made the neighborhood trendy and desirable for all types of companies in creative industries.

For example, at 80 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, a commercial complex where Mr. L.K.'s father ran a fur workshop in 1960 (see Chapter 1), these new creative industries took over the majority of the complex. One of the rare addresses in the neighborhood still owned by a single entity—a large health insurance company—and not a *copropriété*, was renovated in 2005 to house converted apartments and offices of mainly small architecture firms. Just down the street, at 65 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, many of the old manufacturing workshops on the ground floor along the sides of its long courtyard have turned into sound and video production studios as well as public relations firms.

Much of this economic transformation has taken place in the northern part of the neighborhood, north of the cour des Petites Ecuries, including the rue des Petites-Ecuries, rue Martel, rue de Paradis, and parts of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. In 2009, Mr. A.R., a bartender at one of the neighborhood's trendier bars, Café Rouge at 7 bis rue de Paradis, said that his neighborhood was not part of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁷¹ Every time he spoke of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, he referred to it as *là-bas*—over there, not here—pointing in its direction, even though it was only about one hundred feet from his café's front door. For him, the Faubourg Saint-Denis was “the immigrant neighborhood of Africans, Turks, and Kurds,” different and separate from his wealthier and trendier area.⁷² He called his neighborhood “sous-Magenta” (“Below [Boulevard de] Magenta” or, if real estate agents were trying to create a buzz, “SoMa”), a “small village” where everyone knew each other. Using “we” to describe the people of the neighborhood, even though he lived a ten-minute walk from the café on the other side of the Gare de l'Est, A.R. said that the majority of their business comes during the lunch hour from the nearby offices, though at night time most of the customers are locals. Even the businesses in this trendier, newly developing neighborhood were kept in business by quotidian. But SoMa was not as walled-off as A.R. would have liked to believe. As he was speaking that day, three Pakistani construction workers were drinking coffee at his bar. The space of the Faubourg Saint-Denis is almost always shared.

⁷⁰ Philippe Tricaud, “Interview with Philippe Tricaud, September 7, 2012,” In person, September 7, 2012; Charlotte Brunel, “Paris : Rive droite 10e, rive droite 8e,” *Le Monde*, March 1, 2002.

⁷¹ Mr. A.R., “Interview with Mr. A.R., August 7, 2009,” In person, August 7, 2009.

⁷² *Ibid.*

The sharing of public space in the Faubourg Saint-Denis has been most noticeable in the neighborhood's two green spaces adjacent to each other at the top of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. There, a large number of homeless Afghan refugees arrived in 2009. By April that year, hundreds were sleeping in the Jardin Villemin, a park just north of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, located between the Gare de l'Est and the Canal Saint-Martin. In smaller numbers, others—including some Iraqi Kurds—slept in the small, fenced-in park on the Square Alban-Satragne on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis between the rue de Paradis and the Boulevard de Magenta. These homeless users of the Faubourg Saint-Denis blurred the line between residents and quodians because they lived in the neighborhood, spent their days in its public space, but did not leave a trace in historical archives.

The routes by which these refugees arrived in France were long, circuitous, and expensive.⁷³ Most were young men in their twenties and thirties whose families had spent tens of thousands of euros—enormous sums in Afghanistan—and had them smuggled through Europe to an intended destination in England, where many of their fellow countrymen lived. The 10th arrondissement was often the end of their long journey.⁷⁴ These Afghan refugees used the space of the upper part of the Faubourg Saint-Denis discreetly. They tended to rest in small groups, were well dressed and clean considering their circumstances, and spent their days outside in the small park or on the street watching videos on cell phones, playing cards, or talking. They used the street as people who did not want to attract any attention or bother anyone.⁷⁵

This practice continued into 2010 when over 100 new homeless refugees—mostly Iraqi Kurds—arrived at the Square Alban-Satragne in July.⁷⁶ Gilles Bayart, who helped start a small community garden next to the park, almost directly in the center of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, did not mind the refugees sleeping in the vegetable garden “as long as they [did not] make a mess.”⁷⁷ Bayart had gotten to know a number of the refugees during his frequent work tidying

⁷³ For migration stories from Kurds in Cologne, see Sirkeci, “From Guest Workers to Asylum Seekers: Turkish Kurds in Cologne,” 191.

⁷⁴ Their stay in the 10th arrondissement was longer than it should have been, according to French law. Even though the central and municipal governments were well aware of their presence near the Gare de l'Est, the Minister of the Interior—who in France is in charge of the national police—refused to give orders to arrest them or demand to see their papers, generally the beginning of the asylum process if they do not apply by themselves. Doing so would have forced the government, according to French asylum law, to offer temporary shelter to the refugees and to begin the asylum process. Bertrand Delanoë, the mayor of Paris, criticized the government for not acting to give the refugees the housing they deserved and leaving his administration, without the necessary resources, to clean up after the men sleeping in the parks. This was especially surprising after the murder of an Afghan in the Jardin Villemin in early April 2009. Delanoë eventually acted to rid the park of the refugees in August when most people were away on vacation from Paris and were not there to protest. See “« Nous ne venons pas en Europe par plaisir »,” *Le Parisien*, April 22, 2009; “Meurtre d'un réfugié afghan dans un square parisien,” *Le Monde*, April 7, 2009; “Paris a mis fin à l'occupation du square Villemin,” *Le Parisien*, August 18, 2009.

⁷⁵ I tried to speak with a number of the Afghans and none of them wanted to speak with me, understandably so.

⁷⁶ Gilles Bayart, “Interview with Gilles Bayart, August 30, 2010,” In person, August 30, 2010.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* Bayart lived close by on the rue de Paradis and was a frequent participant in the Porte Saint-Denis/Paradis *conseils de quartier*.

up the garden. He found them to be cordial and friendly, doing less damage to the garden than other passersby who often threw garbage and cigarette butts into it. It made Bayart happy to know that their work was able to provide not only food and bring together a community in the neighborhood, but also to shelter needy people who spent their days in the Faubourg Saint-Denis not for work or leisure but out of necessity.

More fortunate quotidian had the choice to come to the Faubourg Saint-Denis. This choice is often impossible for the historian to detect, as it frequently is tied to an individual's unique experiences in the past. When a quotidian chooses the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a home because he or she has developed an important relationship with the space, completely contingent on their past experiences, it creates a conundrum for the historian because it is nearly impossible to explain this seemingly illogical choice.

Mr. M., for example, immigrated to Paris from Mauritius in 1973 at the age of twenty.⁷⁸ He lived with his mother in the 16th arrondissement on the rue de Passy, part of an affluent neighborhood, where she worked as a cook and housekeeper for a family in the same building. Unlike other Mauritians at the time, M. did not work in the garment industry based in the Faubourg Saint-Denis. He was a professional bass player, working gigs all around the city. He first visited the neighborhood in 1975 when he went out at night to its bars with friends. One event marked him—he talked to a blond woman for the first time in his life. “My body shook



Figure 3. La Ferme at 5 rue des Petites-Ecuries on July 15, 2011, 7pm. Author's photo. Amadou is seated on the far right in a red shirt.

⁷⁸ Mr. M., “Interview with Mr. M., June 16, 2010,” In person, June 16, 2010.

when she asked me to kiss her,” he said, unable to believe that a French woman would desire a dark-skinned man like him who did not yet speak French well.⁷⁹ The event marked him, and M. continued to frequent the neighborhood throughout the 1970s. Eventually he became friends with many of the Mauritians in the neighborhood and even though he has never lived or worked in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, in 2010 he continued to visit it multiple times per week to have coffee or a drink at cafés like La Ferme (see Figure 3) and Le Sully or to eat at his favorite Mauritian restaurant, Saveur des Iles at 16 rue de Mazagran. Thanks to all of these years of visiting the neighborhood since his first French kiss, M. calls the Faubourg Saint-Denis his home in Paris even though he neither lives nor works there.

Even more improbable and surprising is Amadou D.’s close relationship with the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁸⁰ Amadou has spent many nights every week since 2008 visiting Nono’s café—before 2010, Le Château d’Eau, and, after their move one hundred feet down the rue des Petites-Ecuries in April 2010, La Ferme (see Figure 3). On July 9, 2003, at the age of 26, Amadou moved to France from his home of Dakar, Senegal.⁸¹ After a few years in Paris, he settled in with a new French girlfriend and moved into an apartment with her in Saint-Mandé, a suburb just to the east of Paris beyond the 20th arrondissement. In 2008, he was working at a cosmetics firm in the northern suburbs of Paris. In order to get home from work he would normally take the RER B from the northern suburbs to the Châtelet/Les Halles station, where he would change to line 1 of the metro to take him home to Saint-Mandé. One day, Amadou decided to get off the RER B train early at the Gare du Nord and to take a leisurely walk south to Châtelet before picking up the metro again. As he walked down the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis that evening, he spotted Le Château d’Eau on his left. It had a good look to it, he later said, as there were a good number of people hanging out at its bar and on its *terrasse*, so he decided to go inside and have a coffee.⁸²

At the bar, he ordered a coffee from M., a mother in her forties who worked most evenings. M., like most of the employees at Le Château d’Eau, was from an Algerian Berber (or Kabyle) family, but she was the only woman on the staff at the time. She and Amadou had a wonderful conversation about nothing in particular, as he remembered it, and the overall experience impressed him so much that he came back again the next night. It was an inconvenient detour for him, adding more than half an hour to his transit time. Amadou had another rewarding visit speaking to M., and thus began a daily tradition for him. As he is an affable, personable man who likes to strike up a conversation with anyone, Amadou quickly became a regular at the café and got to know all of the employees and many of the other customers.

Four years later, Amadou knows more people in the Faubourg Saint-Denis than in any other part of the Paris region. Not only is one more or less guaranteed to run into him on any

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Amadou D., “Interview with Amadou D., January 30, 2010,” In person, January 30, 2010.

⁸¹ Amadou D., “Interview with Amadou D., July 15, 2011,” In person, July 15, 2011.

⁸² Amadou, although he is not a practicing Muslim, does not drink alcohol. D., “Interview with Amadou D., January 30, 2010,” 30.

given day in the early evening at La Ferme, but he has also become integrated into the communities both of quotidian and of residents at La Ferme. One often finds him having a tea with residents from the neighborhood when they get home from work. He also frequently helps a middle-aged man with advanced Parkinson's disease who lives around the corner. He will often pick him up at his apartment and lead him over to La Ferme so he can have a meal of couscous. Despite the significant distances between the Faubourg Saint-Denis and his home and work, as well as the improbability that he would become a quotidian in the neighborhood, Amadou continues to go to La Ferme multiple nights per week. It is people like Amadou, crucial to life in a neighborhood but who have no formal ties to it, whom historians are unable to uncover in their research.

Anthropologists and scholars in other fields often assume that people like Amadou will not choose to add a significant amount of time to their daily commutes in order to socialize regularly at a café. Some studies suggest that commuting is a type of migration, a conscious choice to leave home like a move to another city or another country.⁸³ These often make assumptions that staying at home—even during the day—is a norm and any decision to do otherwise is a negative aberration. This viewpoint is incorrect when applied to the quodidians of the Faubourg Saint-Denis. While some people, such as Mr. K. of Mardin Çorba Salonu, would prefer to eliminate their commutes and live in the place where they spend the majority of their day, others, like Amadou, do not mind their commutes. They even enjoy them when they are not on the most crowded trains, as they can read, think, listen to music, and have valuable time to themselves.

In 2009, one previous resident of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, Mr. H., had just moved from his studio apartment at 78 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis to Malakoff, a suburb just to the south of the 14th arrondissement.⁸⁴ H., a Tunisian immigrant who moved from Djerba to Paris in 1995, had been working for a few years at the same neighborhood bistro less than a minute walk from his apartment. He worked the day shift from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., leaving him enough time to take a walk down the street to do his food shopping for dinner, go home and shower, and make it to Le Château d'Eau or another local café to hang out with his friends into the evening.

While still keeping his job, H. decided to sell his apartment in the Faubourg Saint-Denis because he was tired of all the noise and commotion in the neighborhood at night. He was having trouble sleeping through the night, especially in the summer when he had to leave the window open to keep the apartment cool, and decided the best idea was to move somewhere outside of Paris where he could purchase a one-bedroom apartment for the same price as his studio. He said, though, that even if he had only been able to purchase a studio of the same size as his previous one, he would have moved to the suburbs. All he wanted was peace and quiet at the end

⁸³ See Chapter Three, "Contemporary Migration: Commuters and Internal Movers" in Jeffrey Harris Cohen and Ibrahim Sirkeci, *Cultures of Migration: The Global Nature of Contemporary Mobility* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011).

⁸⁴ Mr. H., "Interview with Mr. H., August 18, 2009," In person, August 18, 2009.

of his workday. Even though he was worried about being the only North African in a majority white building and area, he said he would happily make that move any day because he found the city too challenging a place to call home. The 35-minute metro commute he would have to work did not bother him, since he said he would finally have more time available to himself to think.

Redouane, one of the family members who works at La Ferme and who worked at Le Château d'Eau before 2010, had a similar view of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.⁸⁵ In 2009, he said that even though his family rented the apartment above Le Château d'Eau as part of the café's lease, he never liked to sleep there and preferred to return home to his home in Saint-Denis to the north of Paris. The studio was available to employees to use when they worked the night shift, closing the café at two in the morning, and reopening it at seven o'clock the following morning. Even on those days, Redouane told me that he preferred to take the night bus or get a ride back home from someone in his family with a car. One of his cousins, Nadir, who also works at La Ferme and lives in Saint-Denis, feels the same way about the importance of sleeping farther away from the café.⁸⁶

On multiple occasions the other employees at the café have said that the Faubourg Saint-Denis—or Château d'Eau, as they generally refer to it—is the one of the only neighborhoods left with something for everyone. As Redouane and Nono once mentioned, it is still *populaire*—diverse—and has restaurants “with steaks for 10 euros and for 25 euros, depending on what you want.”⁸⁷ That is “the secret of the neighborhood,” Nono said, and is the reason why he would not want to be spending his days anywhere else in the city.⁸⁸ For him and Redouane, the Faubourg Saint-Denis is their home and their neighborhood, even though they, like Nadir, prefer to live in Saint-Denis. The trees and open space where they live make all the difference to them, even though two of them—Redouane and Nadir—do not have children and are not yet thinking about raising a family.

Individual aesthetics often play a significant role in people's decisions to use the neighborhood. A longtime resident, Mr. G.M., moved to his apartment on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis in the late 1980s and even then, before the surge of real estate prices in Paris, the neighborhood was the cheapest place in Paris with excellent access to transport.⁸⁹ Born in the 1940s, he grew up in Avignon and came to Paris to become a civil servant working in computer programming for a finance division of the French government. Retired, G.M. lives by himself and works as an independent programmer to earn money to supplement his pension, working most days with his computer at the many cafés of the neighborhood. He “loves” the Faubourg Saint-Denis for its diversity, the spectacle on its street, and its beautiful architecture, about which he speaks poetically.

⁸⁵ Nono and Redouane, “Interview with Nono and Redouane, May 15, 2010,” In person, May 15, 2010.

⁸⁶ Nadir, “Interview with Nadir, July 1, 2009,” In person, July 1, 2009.

⁸⁷ Nono and Redouane, “Interview with Nono and Redouane, May 15, 2010.”

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Mr. G.M., “Interview with Mr. G.M., October 6, 2009,” In person, October 6, 2009.

He often chooses to work at Le Sully at 13 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis because he can gaze at the Porte Saint-Denis from its *terrasse* while he works. He finds its shape and texture “refined,” not like the “heavy, ugly” Porte Saint-Martin, two blocks east.⁹⁰ The rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, except for the early twentieth-century Art Nouveau building at number 16, is one of the “most beautiful streets in Paris because of the diversity of its old buildings” with a “subtle, but elegant curve.”⁹¹ Aesthetics, he said, play an important role in determining his place of work in the neighborhood—he will often choose to sit down at a *terrasse* because the light is shining beautifully on the building across the street. Adnan, a Turkish construction worker, also told me that he and his friends had met every Sunday for over ten years for coffee on the *terrasse* at Le Sully because they could not only watch the life of the street go by but also look at the way the arch transformed as the sun moved across the sky. While not everyone who spends time in the Faubourg Saint-Denis is as conscious of the role aesthetics play in their choices of how they use its public space, aesthetics are not solely in the realm of the elite and formally educated.

Many of the quotidian of the Faubourg Saint-Denis, like the residents, have diverse tastes in space. They like the bustle of the city and the Faubourg Saint-Denis, but also like the calm of the suburbs and rural areas, where they can relax. In this regard, the quotidian of the neighborhood have chosen their place of work and home much like middle-class Americans have throughout the twentieth century. They are willing—or in some cases happy—to spend an hour or more per day commuting to work so that they can regularly experience two types of spaces that they love, the country and the city. These tastes in space are often important in influencing where they choose to live and to work. The quotidian whom I have met in the Faubourg Saint-Denis have mostly not been forced out of the city to the suburbs, but rather choose to live outside of the city because they prefer sleeping there than in their favorite neighborhood in Paris.

Regular customers of a number of Turkish and Kurdish businesses in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, however, have chosen to come into the neighborhood less frequently from the suburbs where they live. Ibrahim Aplatlı, the manager of the Turkish *épicerie* Günes, witnessed this phenomenon as early as 1992.⁹² He said that while the garment industry was what first brought so many Turks to the neighborhood, “they are trying to leave the neighborhood to leave Paris for the suburbs” where there were more jobs, Turkish restaurants, and other Turkish food shops.⁹³ Many more recently arrived Turks and especially Kurds, however, continued to move to the neighborhood during the 1990s and 2000s, keeping it active as a commercial center for their community.

Since 2009, however, many of the Turkish businesses in the neighborhood have closed down due to both the suburbanization and increased wealth of the Turkish community in the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ouahhabi, “Emission Islamique : Connaître l’Islam.”

⁹³ Ibid.

Paris region as well as a general retail downturn for certain businesses. Rather than come and shop in the Faubourg Saint-Denis over the weekend or after work, Turkish families go shopping at much larger Turkish supermarkets in the suburbs that have a wider selection of products at lower prices. It has become the norm in Turkish immigrant communities throughout Europe for the Turkish supermarket to have replaced the *bakkal*, or neighborhood grocery store, as their communities become wealthier.⁹⁴ Supermarché Imparator, or Emperor Supermarket, worthy in size to be American, drew much of the Turkish population south of Paris to its location in Corbeil-Essonnes, just over fifteen miles southeast of the city.⁹⁵ Another large Turkish supermarket, Supermarché Pazarcık, has a café and a pastry shop as well in its location in Alfortville, just to the southeast of Paris.⁹⁶ Another large community of Turks was also based in Pantin, to the northeast of Paris's 19th arrondissement, where they have supermarkets, cafés, concert venues, and other shops.⁹⁷ It is clear that many Turks have cars and are willing to travel in the suburbs to do their shopping. The community's most important events, too, are held in the suburbs. Most weddings are held in lavish halls in Argenteuil, Pantin, Stains, Sarcelles, and other northern suburbs.⁹⁸

Some of the shops that closed, such as music shops, had a difficult time staying in business by 2009 not only because of the less frequent visits by their clients who lived in the suburbs but also because of the general disappearance of record shops caused by the rise of music downloading. The owner of Tuana Music, a small music shop at 3 rue de Metz, expressed his fear of closure in 2010.⁹⁹ For immigrants, record shops had been the only way to access the music of their home cultures, even in 2004 when many did not have easy access to computers. By 2012, music videos and downloadable albums posted on the internet are so readily accessible that most people would rather spend their money elsewhere than on CDs. Tuana Music's owner first tried to diversify his product line by offering musical instruments. After a lukewarm introduction, he chose to expand the business even more and began selling bikinis and women's summer clothing, as well.¹⁰⁰ One must evolve.

Just as the Turks took to life in the suburbs, the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement and the residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis tried—though not always successfully—to make the

⁹⁴ Tapia, "Introduction," 26.

⁹⁵ See their large advertisement on the cover of the most popular Turkish periodical filled with classified ads for Turkish-owned businesses, some advertised in French, though most in Turkish: "Posta Europe : Mensuel de Publicité Franco-Turc", July 2010, 1.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 16.

⁹⁷ "Posta Europe : Mensuel de Publicité Franco-Turc."

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ "Interview with Owner of Tuana Music, April 23, 2010," In person, April 23, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.; "Posta Europe : Mensuel de Publicité Franco-Turc," 28.

neighborhood itself more suburban. They did not apply this vision of a green, clean, and quiet simply as a tool to increase real estate values. That would be too cynical of an analysis. The desire to remove dirt, noise, and crowds from cities was ancient, and these parties truly wanted their city and neighborhood to be rid of these impairments. It was also part of a general agenda pushed by the Hôtel de Ville everywhere in Paris. But it is also clear that the increasingly local nature of municipal politics, as well as the amplified risks of indebted homeownership and of a city budget tied to elevated real estate values together created a new framework that influenced both parties' actions at least indirectly.¹⁰¹

Since 2002, there has been a rise in noise complaints against bars after ten o'clock at night (especially since smoking was banned inside all eating and drinking establishments in the city in 2008), more requests to remove café's tables from the sidewalk, a new regime of fines placed on people leaving trash in the street, and a general program to control life and its entropy on the street. While this has created new conflicts between café owners and the police, as well as between residents and quotidiens, public space has continued to be used the same way. The most significant changes to the neighborhood that have corresponded with this suburban vision are a general quieting of the nighttime and the disappearance of cars on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Nightlife in Paris ended earlier in 2012 than it had in the 1960s or even 1990s. Restaurants and bars closed earlier, cafés had to be more careful to keep their customers quiet earlier in the evening, and fewer clubs and late-night music venues remained open. In a 2002 article about Brasserie Flo, the Art Nouveau-decorated restaurant that has been open since the beginning of the twentieth century at 7 cour des Petites-Ecuries, the title suggested that the restaurant would be a good place to eat late in the evening: "Flo, until late at night."¹⁰² Its last seating occurred at ten at night.¹⁰³ On a business card from the late 1970s, Flo and its sister restaurant, Julien, at 16 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis advertised their special "Faim de Nuit" ("Nighttime hunger") menu for 98 francs.¹⁰⁴ It included a main course—either duck confit, leg of lamb, or cooked oysters—a dessert, and a quarter-sized bottle of wine—Riesling, Beaujolais, or Côtes du Rhone—but could only be ordered *after* eleven o'clock. On a different card from the same era, Julien advertised that

¹⁰¹ It must also be noted that private real estate investors—both individuals and larger companies—came to own property in the area. They also desired to influence municipal politics and played a significant role in lobbying for urban planning changes that would increase real estate prices and the return on their investments. I have chosen not to focus on them here because their interests have been purely monetary and they do not have to live in and experience the neighborhood as resident-homeowners do. Their influence is also difficult to see as much of it happens in closed-door meetings with political officials whose records will not be open to the public for decades to come.

¹⁰² Françoise Dupuy, "Flo, jusque tard dans la nuit," *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, September 2002.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ "Menu 'Faim de nuit' aux restaurants Flo", Late 1970s, E(B) 27, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

it served food until two in the morning, and one can only assume that Flo had similar hours.¹⁰⁵ Even in 1991, both were serving food until 1:30 a.m.¹⁰⁶

At La Ferme, noise complaints after 10:00 p.m. have been a serious challenge to Nono's business. On two occasions in 2010 and 2011 during a weekly Monday night acoustic gypsy jazz concert, the police came to shut down the music due to noise complaints from neighbors. A third complaint would have brought a heavy fine to La Ferme and would have shut down the restaurant for a short period of time. Even though the restaurants' doors were closed and the music was not amplified, residents in the neighborhood, according to many different café owners, had become much more sensitive to nighttime activity continuing late into the evening.¹⁰⁷ Residents throughout Paris, even with their thick, double-paned insulated windows, want to keep the space of their home quiet at night. They expect this privacy in a way that they did not in the 1960s when people were more used to hearing the noise of their neighbors, as they lived a more public life in their buildings, frequently sharing toilets and water. Although not all residents feel this way—Mr. R.M., for example, who lives on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis explicitly likes the noise on the street and wishes others would stop complaining—the ones who make themselves heard do.¹⁰⁸ Rémi Féraud, the Socialist mayor of the 10th arrondissement since 2008, recognized this new desire of residents for nighttime privacy: "If I wanted to caricature the Parisian, I would say that he wants to be able to party below the windows of other people, but the evening when he doesn't want to party, he doesn't want others to party below his window."¹⁰⁹

These complaints continue despite the much lower levels of noise due to a significant reduction in automobile traffic in the neighborhood. Since the 1980s, residents across Paris have wanted to pedestrianize their neighborhoods, especially older market streets like the Faubourg Saint-Denis. In 2002, a poll conducted by *Dix et demi*, a free trimestral publication printed by a residents' association in the 10th arrondissement that was allied with the then Socialist mayor, Tony Dreyfus, showed that of all possible improvement projects the Mairie could finance, residents most wanted new pedestrian streets and the reduction of car traffic. More than 50 percent of the 144 respondents believed that these were projects should be the priorities of the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement, a much greater proportion than the other suggested projects, including new parking spots, fixing sidewalks, and constructing bicycle lanes.¹¹⁰ Although

¹⁰⁵ "Carte de visite, Restaurant Julien", Late 1970s, E(B) 27, Archives de la Préfecture de Police.

¹⁰⁶ See listings for Flo and Julien in *Le Guide du Routard: Restos et bistrots de Paris* (Paris: Hachette, 1991), 91.

¹⁰⁷ In 2010, the owner of *Le Château d'Eau* on the corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis complained of massive pressure by the police every weekend night, especially when his bartenders turned up the music for people to dance. Mr. N., "Interview with Mr. N., September 27, 2010," In person, September 27, 2010; Rory Mulholland, "A Paris Street Battles for Its Soul," *Agence France-Presse*, October 4, 2012, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hv-ZH-7XJ7Zj9z-KaxMnqUxEGdYA?docId=CNG.4cc966b23c1685cec8d5b98063a3470e.881>.

¹⁰⁸ Mr. R.M., "Interview with Mr. R.M., August 27, 2010," In person, August 27, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ Mulholland, "A Paris Street Battles for Its Soul."

¹¹⁰ Bike lanes would become more important five years later. For the poll results, see "Sondage exclusif réalisé pour Dix et demi. Les habitant(e)s du 10e s'expriment librement," *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, September 2002.

residents often opposed these types of traffic changes in wealthier parts of the city, as many of them had cars, car ownership rates were lower in the 10th arrondissement.¹¹¹ A reduction in automobile traffic meant quieter, calmer, more attractive streets to the majority of the residents of the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

Shopkeepers were often opposed to these developments, since changes to the street often put them out of business. This was especially true for shops that catered to customers visiting from other parts of the city and region, as was normally the case on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis. Not only did they lose business because it was more difficult to drive and park in the neighborhood—many of their customers drove to do their shopping—but because deliveries became more challenging as they were limited to a smaller window of time during the day and because the trucks would often get stuck in heavy traffic. In 2002, one saw the changes as a “paradox—the neighborhood is becoming more and more pleasant to live in for those who do not spend their day in it.”¹¹²

The Hôtel de Ville realized that subtle changes to traffic patterns—making one-way streets, widening sidewalks, or creating pedestrian zones—could quickly transform a neighborhood and make its streets calmer. Making it inconvenient for cars and trucks to drive or to park on a street was found to be the most effective way to quiet a street, to remove its undesirable manufacturing and delivery-based businesses—they did not like to operate on streets where it was inconvenient for delivery trucks to pass—and to make the city more peaceful. In addition, the city realized that quieter streets made them more desirable for residents and increased real estate prices.

In October 2001, in the first ever *conseil de quartier* meeting for the Porte Saint-Denis/Paradis *quartier* (which includes the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis), the council planned “to change the neighborhood” by developing a *quartier Vert*, or green neighborhood, centered around an automobile-free rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis.¹¹³ The first part of the project had already begun by creating a *rue-marché*, or street-market, on the first block of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis between the arch and the rue de Metz. There, the sidewalks had been widened, the road narrowed and made one-way going north in the opposite direction from the traffic coming south on the street from the Boulevard de Magenta. The idea here was to “dissuade” drivers from using the street.¹¹⁴

These projects were elaborated on just a month later in a special meeting by the city planning commission of the *conseil de quartier*. Almost all of the suggestions they made for changes to the neighborhood involved widening sidewalks, making two-way streets one way, removing parking spots, and, on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, not only making the street

¹¹¹ Forty-seven percent of households in Paris in 1991, for example, possessed a car. Vasseur, *Que sais-je ? La mairie de Paris*, 58.

¹¹² “Rue du fbg-St-Denis, La grogne gagne chez les commerçants.”

¹¹³ “Compte rendu du Conseil de quartier ‘Porte St-Denis Paradis,’ mardi 2 octobre 2001”, October 2, 2001, Archives de la Mairie du 10^e arrondissement de Paris.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

narrow and one-way, but also changing its direction every block.¹¹⁵ Their goal was very clear: “the object of these changes in traffic direction is to cut the transit traffic in the neighborhood.”¹¹⁶ Over the next few years, all of these plans were instituted in the neighborhood. Car and truck traffic dropped significantly and pedestrians—residents and quotidians alike—filled the streets even more than in the past. Many of the businesses in the neighborhood were hurt by the quick effects of the change, including Tuana Music, whose owner talked of 2001 to 2003 as the worst drop in his shop’s history because of his loss of customers from the suburbs. These urban planning changes made this period a challenging one to run a retail business in the Faubourg Saint-Denis.

One industry flourished despite these traffic changes, however. In 2012, almost one hundred small hair and nail salons for men and women operated in the area around the Château-



Figure 4. A Saturday afternoon (August 8, 2009) in the black hair styling neighborhood on the rue du Château-d’Eau between the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin and the Boulevard de Strasbourg. Author’s photo.

d’Eau metro station on the corner of the rue du Château-d’Eau and the Boulevard de Strasbourg. Here, customers can get weaves, fades, braids, or dozens of other hairstyles, as well as elaborate nail designs.¹¹⁷ Château d’Eau, which had only infrequently been referred to as a neighborhood, began to be known as *the* center of black hair salons in the Paris region, even more than Château Rouge in the 18th arrondissement, the hub of African shopping in

¹¹⁵ “Relevé de décisions de la reunion de la commission urbanisme du conseil de quartier Porte Saint-Denis/Paradis, 28 novembre 2001”, November 28, 2001, Archives de la Mairie du 10e arrondissement de Paris.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ For more on the culture of African-American hair styles, see Jeff Stilson, *Good Hair* (Lionsgate Home Entertainment, 2009), a documentary featuring Chris Rock. For an academic study on African-American women and the politics and culture of their hairstyle choices and ideas of self-beautification see Noliwe M. Rooks, *Hair Raising: Beauty, Culture, and African American Women* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996).

Paris.¹¹⁸ This neighborhood is not African or Antillean, it is a black neighborhood where immigrants and second- or third-generation immigrants from African or Antillean families come to get their hair and nails done. Although most of the hair stylists themselves are black, the industry's workers are of different backgrounds. Pakistanis have come to own and run the majority of the black hair supply shops in the area mostly on the Passage de l'Industrie, the Boulevard de Strasbourg, and the rue du Château-d'Eau. Almost all of the manicurists working inside the packed salons are of Chinese background. Very few of the people involved in this industry—either its employees or customers—live in the neighborhood. Most of the community using these salons comes via the metro, the Gare du Nord, the Gare de l'Est, or the bus. Fewer cars (and bike lanes after 2007) only made the public space of the neighborhood more attractive to them.

Just like the other barber shops and hair salons in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, these salons are important meeting places for different communities. The culture of these hair stylists' shops has a substantial influence on the neighborhood's public space, as the salons' employees and customers spill onto the street to hang out (see Figure 4). As weaves are a multi-step process that involves the application of chemicals and often hours of waiting, the street is often a better alternative to the stuffy, chemical-filled interiors of the salons. In Figure 4, cars parked on the street become chairs and the barrier built to separate the street's bike lane from its lane of car traffic is used as another sidewalk since there the narrow one near them often becomes too jammed to remain comfortable.



Figure 5. The corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau and the Boulevard de Strasbourg on Saturday, August 8, 2009 at 8pm. With the late Parisian days in the summer, the hair stylists remain open very late. Author's photo.

¹¹⁸ Château Rouge is even more filled with quotidiens than the Faubourg Saint-Denis—it is the marketplace for all African-related food and music, as well as for socializing, for many different African communities scattered throughout the Paris region, including the Congolese, Senegalese, Cameroonians, and Ivorians. Most quotidiens travel to Château Rouge via metro line 4 from the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l'Est.

The corner of the rue du Château-d'Eau and the Boulevard de Strasbourg (see Figure 5), especially between 2006 and 2011, was the center of the hair stylists' market. Because there were many salons, most of which offered similar services, their owners chose to hire male hawkers to wait outside the metro to attract potential clients—generally women because their hairstyles cost much more than men's—to their salon.¹¹⁹ Their job, however, transformed the public space of the neighborhood by imposing on people as soon as they left the metro station. They would incessantly shout, "Braids! Come get your hair done! Nails!" and dozens of other exclamations to attract customers' attention. According to one hawker, "When you see a potential client, you cannot let them get past you."¹²⁰ Women sometimes enjoyed the game, bargaining with each seller and often getting to flirt, too. Often, though, four or five sellers at once would overwhelm a woman and surround her on the street, each one trying to bring her to his salon. This could verge on harassment and these scenes deterred many women from coming to the neighborhood to get their hair done. It also made the space just outside of the metro undesirable for many other people who used the neighborhood, especially the residents.

The loud noise on the street and in the courtyards of the buildings into the night, the pungent smells of the nail polish and chemicals used to treat customers' hair, the garbage and hairballs left out on the street, and the crowded sidewalks coming from the black hair stylists have led some residents in the neighborhood to complain to the Mairie in recent years. They have used both the *conseil de quartier* of the Château-d'Eau/Lancry neighborhood and a handful of neighborhood associations to combat the growth of the hairdressers.

At a special *conseil de quartier* meeting dedicated to cleanliness in the neighborhood held on the evening of October 19, 2011 in the school on the Passage des Recollets near the Canal Saint-Martin, residents had a chance to voice their concerns about the hair industry.¹²¹ As this issue was an important one for residents—when one of the organizers ironically asked the crowd "Why are there so many new people here tonight?" the loudest voice of many responded "because there are so many problems in our neighborhood"—55 people turned up. Only ten seemed to be under the age of 40, and every person in the audience appeared to be white except for one black woman in her forties or fifties. Although the participants had come for a variety of reasons, when an organizer started the meeting by reading aloud letters sent by residents to the *conseil* about problems of cleanliness, the only topic that elicited groans from the crowd was the hairstylists on the rue du Château-d'Eau.

Even before the meeting had started, two women who had just met began to discuss how outraged they were about the "situation" on the rue du Château-d'Eau near the Mairie. One, in her forties who lived farther east on the rue du Château-d'Eau near République, stated

¹¹⁹ These hawkers were paid small commissions for each customer they brought to a salon, usually in the range of two to five euros per person. See "Les rabatteurs des coiffeurs afro agacent les habitants," *Le Parisien*, June 8, 2010.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ I attended this public meeting and have inserted quotes based on my notes and on an audio recording I made of the event. This *passage* is not like the others that I have mentioned in that it is not covered and acts like a normal, small street.

definitively, “I never take the rue du Château-d’Eau” upon leaving the Château-d’Eau metro station. Instead she took a detour and walked south a block on the Boulevard de Strasbourg, took a left on the rue Gustave Goublier, another left on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin, and then a right on the rue du Château-d’Eau, all to avoid fifty meters of the street filled with hair salons (depicted in Figures 4 and 5). The other woman nodded and responded that she was upset that her daughter felt obliged to walk south on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin all the way to the Grands Boulevards to catch the 38 bus to her university, when there was a stop just a minute walk away down the same stretch of the rue du Château-d’Eau.

These types of comments were expressed publicly during the meeting. Another woman said that she could not walk on the rue du Château-d’Eau because there was “too much hair everywhere on the sidewalk” to get by. Two representatives for the Direction de la Propreté et de l’Eau (the division of the Hôtel de Ville in charge of water and cleaning), during a short presentation, stated that “the rue du Château-d’Eau is a huge problem” for them, as the trash bins are not large enough to contain all the hair and other material thrown out by the hairstylists. They suggested that in the next ten days they would start giving out 35-euro tickets to offenders who did not place their garbage into a bin. The crowd erupted in disappointment and frustration, mixing cries of “35 euros isn’t high enough!” and “It’ll never work because you can only give them tickets if you catch them in the act” with more personal calls to “come sweep in front of my door every day and you’ll see how bad it is!”

The mayor, Rémi Féraud, stepped in to calm the situation, asking his constituents to remember that the 10th arrondissement was not a rich part of Paris, like the 5th arrondissement, and therefore residents cannot ask for it to be perfectly clean. He linked cleanliness and wealth directly and said that if the 10th arrondissement were as clean as the wealthier parts of Paris, most of the people in the meeting would not be able to afford to live there. When he suggested that French people, in general, are known to urinate on the street more than people in other European cities and that what was needed was a change in people’s behavior, one woman shouted out that it was “foreigners” who were the problem, not French people, a number of other people shouted out in agreement. Féraud seemed upset by her open racism and told her, “Madame, we are all Parisians.”

The Mairie has nonetheless listened to residents’ complaints and has tried to use new powers it received in 2007 to prevent the opening of more hair stylists in the neighborhood. A more recent aspect of decentralization policy and increased local democracy has been an extension of the city’s right of pre-emption on real estate deals to commercial leases.¹²² In 2007, the municipality received the right to prevent the signing of leases for stores, for example, if it believed that the new renter was acting against local city plans (the PLU or *plan local d’urbanisme*). Recent versions of these plans for Paris have given the city and the

¹²² For the legislation, passed at the end of 2007, see “Décret no. 2007-1827 du 26 décembre 2007,” *Journal officiel de la République Française* (December 28, 2007): Texte 4 sur 142.

arrondissements the right to act against what they call monoactivity, an over-prevalence of one type of business in a neighborhood.

Monoactivity is considered a problem because it prevents residents from having access to a diversity of shops in their neighborhood. Since 2007, this diversity has been enshrined in the local city plans as a right. In the case of the area around Château d'Eau, residents had petitioned the Hôtel de Ville and Mairie of the 10th arrondissement to use their pre-emption powers and budget to act to create a greater variety of shops in the neighborhood. Black hair stylists, according to these residents, had taken over retail spaces in the Château d'Eau area and made it impossible for other businesses to open because the hair stylists could afford to pay higher rents than other businesses. Their monoactivity, these groups argued, prevented residents from having access to a diverse, Parisian neighborhood, with butchers, bakeries, wine shops, and other small retail businesses.

A private-public partnership tied to the Hôtel de Ville, the SEMAEST, has been given the task to fund the pre-emption projects in the 10th arrondissement, most of which have been acquisitions of property.¹²³ The SEMAEST has used its right to pre-emption to acquire most of the spaces it currently owns in the 10th arrondissement. Their “redynamization” project, Vital’Quartier, has been given a budget of almost 100 million euros since 2004 to buy retail spaces, rent them to businesses that would otherwise not be able to afford available space in the neighborhood at subsidized prices, and eventually sell the spaces at a higher price a few years later to fund the purchase of future spaces.¹²⁴ This is essentially a form of state-run social housing but for retail businesses.

SEMAEST has stepped into the Faubourg Saint-Denis to bring in shops intended to be used by a wealthy, educated clientele. By 2012, 160 shops in Paris were rented by Vital’Quartier and since 2008 it has purchased a number of empty storefronts in the Faubourg Saint-Denis neighborhood, renting them to a butcher (86 rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis), multiple wine shops and fancy *épiceries* (including one on the rue du Château-d’Eau just near the hair stylists), and cafés (one farther east on the rue du Château-d’Eau). These shops, which cater to a wealthier clientele than most of the shops in the Faubourg Saint-Denis, have trouble affording the neighborhood’s increasingly higher rents.

Although quodians surely are customers at these shops, they are specifically intended for residents. According to the mission of Vital’Quartier its “goal is...to bring concrete responses to urban problems. With a conviction: economic revitalization responds to the needs of

¹²³ For the most detailed study on the role of the Hôtel de Ville in influencing the development of shops in Paris during this period, see Antoine Fleury, “Du quartier à la ville durable ? Les commerces de proximité dans l’action de la Mairie de Paris”, 2011, http://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/53/79/74/PDF/Fleury_Commerces_de_proximitA_.pdf; “Compte rendu du Conseil d’arrondissement (10e) en date du 7 décembre 2009”, 2009, Archives de la Mairie du 10e arrondissement de Paris.

¹²⁴ Fleury, “Du quartier à la ville durable ? Les commerces de proximité dans l’action de la Mairie de Paris,” 2; SEMAEST, “Vital’Quartier : Saint-Denis (1er, 2e arr.)”, February 2012, http://www.semaest.fr/sites/default/files/120125vitalq_1-2e.pdf.

residents, makes their daily life [*quotidien*] easier, and makes their living environment more agreeable and friendlier. In other words, it creates improved living standards.”¹²⁵

This recent campaign against monoactivity marked a drastic transformation in the Hôtel de Ville and Mairies’ control of city streets. It cemented the active role that elected representatives have in shaping the retail landscape on Paris’s streets. They were able to be held accountable by residents for the offerings—or lack thereof—in the neighborhoods in their jurisdiction. As in the case of the closing of a fishmonger on the rue des Martyrs in the 9th arrondissement in 2012, the residents’ first move when they were upset about a shop closing was to petition the mayor of the arrondissement to find a similar shop to replace it.¹²⁶ This extension of municipal officials’ powers over the opening and closing of stores has been more severe in Paris than in most big cities. Residents have been ever more demanding in asking the mayor of their arrondissements to prevent the free market from determining the evolution of retail stores in their neighborhoods.

Pressure on the hair stylists of the neighborhood came not only from the municipal level but also from the national level. During his two-year term as Minister of the Interior between 2005 and 2007, as well as during his five-year presidential term between 2007 and 2012, Nicolas Sarkozy ran an aggressive program against illegal immigrants in France. During the summer of 2005, the French police led raids on immigrants suspected to be lacking visas or the correct paperwork to remain in France. Of the thirteen neighborhood-defined court orders given to the police that summer and autumn, almost half were for the Faubourg Saint-Denis—two were for the area around the Strasbourg Saint-Denis metro station and four for the Château-d’Eau area.¹²⁷ During these raids, the police had a short period of time, usually a few days, during which they could legally check the papers of anyone whom they believed might be committing any infraction of French immigration law. This could take place not only on the street, but inside shops, cafés, the metro, and hair salons. Eighty people were deported during these thirteen raids by the police across Paris and countless others in the Faubourg Saint-Denis frightened and antagonized by the police.¹²⁸

The hair styling industry has acted intelligently to prevent the city from stopping new openings in the neighborhood. The majority of the hair stylists sublet their spaces, so when a business closes or changes hand, the space’s lease does not, as the renter finds a new subletter, usually a different hair stylist.¹²⁹ The city cannot, therefore, interfere with the transfer because it only has the right to block lease changes and to use its pre-emption powers on property sales. It is in the interest of both the landlord and the leaseholder to develop a system of subletting, because

¹²⁵ SEMAEST, “Vital’Quartier : Lancry (10e arr.)”, July 2010, 1, http://www.semaest.fr/sites/default/files/100615vitalq_lancry.pdf.

¹²⁶ Sciolino, “On a Street Filled With History, One That Got Away.”

¹²⁷ Tom Pais, “Rafles : seule réponse aux étrangers et sans-papiers ?,” *Dix et demi. Vivre dans le 10e*, December 2005.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*; Sébastien Ramnoux, “Révolte à Château-d’Eau après l’intervention policière,” *Le Parisien*, October 6, 2005.

¹²⁹ The complexities of shop rentals in the neighborhood are generally not discussed in the hair industry and most people whom I have asked refuse to answer my questions.

the hairstylists in the neighborhood pay higher rents than other businesses. If the Mairie were to block a landlord from renting to hairstylists, the monthly rent would surely decrease because no other type of business in the neighborhood is willing to pay such high rents.

Monoactivity is and has been a natural part of Paris's retail and manufacturing economy. For the black hair stylists of Château-d'Eau and the crystal, fur, clothing, and food shops of the Faubourg Saint-Denis in 1960, as well as for the furniture makers of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine near the Bastille since the eighteenth century, proximity to one's competitors has been an avenue to success. One could even argue that monoactivity has historically been the basis of much of Paris's economic output. Every neighborhood specialized in one or a number of trades, manufacturing industries, and retail businesses. For retail shops, like the hair stylists or crystal shops on the rue du Paradis, monoactivity helped attract clients by making the area a hub and destination. Working as a group, the individual businesses were able to draw more customers. This phenomenon is not unique to Paris, either. In all big cities, the same benefits push related businesses and competitors to base themselves in close proximity to each other.

Neighborhood groups and the Château-d'Eau/Lancry *conseil de quartier* have acted only to stop the monoactivity of hair stylists. They have not, however, tried to stop the opening of businesses in the other main retail industry in their neighborhood—wholesale clothing. While it surely qualifies as monoactivity in the neighborhood as most of the storefronts on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin and the rue du Château-d'Eau east of the rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin are, like in the Sentier, dedicated to bulk clothing sales. One could argue that wholesale businesses are more problematic in preventing neighborhood life because they do not serve any purpose to residents. But in the case of the black hair salons, residents have successfully convinced their elected representatives to use the anti-monoactivity legislation to stop their spread.

What this suggests is that the issue at hand for the residents of Château-d'Eau is not monoactivity. Because the hairstylists' customers—as well as noise, the smell of chemicals, and discarded hair—spill out onto the street from inside the storefronts' packed interiors, the industry has a much greater impact on the public space of the neighborhood than other businesses. The hair stylists, in fact, have defined the street life around the Château-d'Eau metro since at least 2005. For residents who want to live in a cleaner and quieter neighborhood, one that conforms more to their idea of a good neighborhood, the hairstylists are infringing on that desire. They are the symbol of a poorer, rowdier Paris in which many new homeowners would rather not live. But more importantly, they impose on the physical experience of residents in the neighborhood.

Residents feel alienated from this community on the street because it feels like a foreign space to them and their bodies.¹³⁰ Other than hearing French—the main language on the street,

¹³⁰ For a theoretical foundation on the cultural norms of the public space of a neighborhood and their imposition on individuals, their bodies, and their actions while using the space, see Chapter 2, "Propriety" in Luce Giard, Michel

although English and a handful of African and Caribbean languages are sometimes spoken—the way the employees and customers at the hair stylists’ use public space is unfamiliar and often considered invasive. When a residents’ association suggests in public at *conseil de quartier* meetings that residents should call the police as soon as they hear too much noise coming from a hair stylist’s shop, it shows that they feel distant from the community below them. They do not feel comfortable going downstairs to ask the hair stylists’ to quiet down because they assume that they will not want to listen.¹³¹ Although it is rare to see overt racism toward the black hairstylists in the neighborhood from the residents, who are mostly French and white, the skin color of the quotidians filling the streets around Château-d’Eau serves to only accentuate the more significant cultural and class differences in the eyes of residents. Surely there are some people who harbor open racist feelings, like the woman who claimed foreigners were the problem during the *conseil de quartier* meeting, but the majority of people are not. These are two communities that live apart, however, and race is just one factor that acts to separate them.

The residents of the neighborhood and the hair styling industry have two different visions of the use of urban space—one unrestricted, open, and rambunctious, the other regulated, restrained, and calm. “It is a problem of respect, of behavior—there is a certain respect of the public space that must be reached [in the Château d’Eau area]” said one resident, Jacques, at a *conseil de quartier* meeting on June 16, 2010.¹³² He continued to say that “the issue is not about monoactivity or the nationality of the people, but about the respect of the public space of the neighborhood.”¹³³ Although the residents do not want total quiet on their streets, the chaos of the street below—as they interpret it—has gone too far. Although they love the city more than ever before and are willing to pay more than ever before to live in it, these residents increasingly do not like its traditionally urban aspects—its constant movement, its crowds, its unruliness. They want to live in a neighborhood that is theirs, in which they feel comfortable walking on the streets and visiting its shops. They do not want to live in an urban marketplace—they want their bodies to be protected from the intrusions they feel every time they set foot on the street or open the window of their apartment.

The real estate question is the tipping point. The rise of homeownership and the deep debt in which many Parisian homeowners find themselves only serve to accentuate neighborhood conflicts between them and the quotidians below them. In a time when increased prices for apartments in Paris are tied to quiet streets, there is no question that homeowners in the Château-d’Eau worry that a housing prices may drop if they do not slowly rid the neighborhood of the culture of the black hair stylists. Although not all homeowners consciously make these calculations, acting as a group, they are all motivated to encourage future increases in

de Certeau, and Pierre Mayol, *The Practice of Everyday Life, Volume 2: Living and Cooking*, trans. Timothy J. Tomasik (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 15–34.

¹³¹ At the *conseil de quartier* meeting on June 16, 2012, various residents suggested that calling the police as a first response was the correct decision.

¹³² From the author’s personal recording of the meeting.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

housing prices. Even homeowners who moved to the Faubourg Saint-Denis for its diversity and exciting street life frequently will support the gentrification of their streets if the value of their most important investment, their home, is threatened.

The future of the streets and public space of the Faubourg Saint-Denis will be shaped by the confluence of local politics, the consumption patterns of all of the users of the neighborhood, changing demographics, and general economic trends, especially in retail businesses. It is the last of the four that will most likely play the most significant role in years to come. As in much of Paris, the cost of renting retail space has gone up dramatically—almost fourfold—in the Faubourg Saint-Denis during the last ten years. New rents are on average 3,000 euros per month for a 600 to 800 square foot space, while the average lease for the same amount of space held by stores already in operation in 2010 was approximately 800 euros per month.¹³⁴ Although it is also possible for a new shop to purchase an older, cheaper lease from a shop currently in operation, they have to pay a large amount of money up front for the future discounted rate, a cost often of hundreds of thousands of euros. This current disparity—between shops paying low rents and those moving in paying high ones—will slowly disappear as long as rents in Paris do not drop suddenly.¹³⁵ At the same time, it is certain that the Faubourg Saint-Denis will be a less attractive place for new immigrants to open up businesses, as they did in the 1950s or 1980s. The costs will be prohibitive, except for the cheaper retail spaces of the Passage Brady and Passage du Prado, which remain undesirable enough for many businesses and their potential customers. But it is possible that the hair salons and other businesses geared to the neighborhood's current quotidian will continue to flourish because their customers will continue to come and pay for their services. Although it is unclear how this general transformation will play out, as one cannot predict which types of businesses will continue to attract enough paying customers to afford these high rents, one can be sure that because of the architecture of the retail spaces of the neighborhood—their small sizes—they will not attract many chains or big businesses. Only small businesses can thrive in these spaces.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis will not have the same problems that other newly constructed neighborhoods in Paris and in France have in attracting small businesses. For example, the neighborhood near the Bibliothèque François Mitterrand in the 13th arrondissement, built almost from scratch in the 1990s and 2000s, as well as the new neighborhood currently in construction on the site of the old Renault factory in Billancourt, just to the southwest of Paris, both contain buildings that have large retail spaces. Although there are a number of non-chain businesses in

¹³⁴ This information comes from a discussion with Guillaume Kling, an employee of BNP Immobilier, the real estate arm of the largest bank in France, BNP Paribas. In 2010 he was in charge of renting a small space on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis and had a thorough understanding of the market for retail spaces in the neighborhood.

Guillaume Kling, "Interview with Guillaume Kling, September 9, 2010," In person, September 9, 2010.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

these neighborhoods, especially restaurants and bars, even these are based in large spaces. This architecture attracts big retail businesses because only they can afford the high rents. Most real estate developers desire these types of clients because they are not as risky—one can be more certain that a large company will pay its rent than a small business with few assets—so these types of spaces will continue to be built. Small businesses, though, need small spaces, and the Faubourg Saint-Denis, as long as its buildings remain standing, will continue to attract them.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, neighborhoods in Paris have become sites increasingly in the hands of their residents and homeowners. Politically, the neighborhood has come to be viewed and treated as a place for these residents, a space to be shaped for and by their interests, whether they be cultural, social, or economic. What has happened in Paris and in the Faubourg Saint-Denis is part of a global change to city centers, where people have rediscovered a taste for the urban and the antique as well as a tolerance for diversity and are willing to pay for it. But the story in Paris is distinctive in that coupled with these economic and cultural shifts were significant structural institutional and political changes specific to it and to France.

The importance of daily mobility in shaping neighborhoods, however, is ignored by this current state of local politics. Although mobility has historically been viewed as an urban problem—the mythic urban village where residents all know each other has always been seen as the antidote to the chaos caused by a city in constant motion and lacking groundedness—it has played a vital role in maintaining the community life in the same neighborhoods. Mobility is not a chaotic component of modern life that one needs to remove or solve; it is rather the force that produces and sustains life in big cities.

It is often the people who do not live in a neighborhood—its quotidians and other visitors—that turn that space in the city into a neighborhood, that create community within it, whether it be in Paris, Shanghai, New York, London, Tokyo, or any other big city. Residents and quotidians together create mutable communities and neighborhoods out of urban space. The rise of homeownership, municipal democracy, and real estate prices in Paris, together as a confluence of events, have given one group new motivation, incentives, and means to control that space. This moment of gentrification in the Faubourg Saint-Denis is not a story of the forced departure of the users of a neighborhood—generally viewed as former, less wealthy residents—due to higher real estate prices. In this case, it is a story in which the daily users of a neighborhood—its quotidians—continue to come to it from afar, despite the gentrification that has taken place. As the quotidians of the Faubourg Saint-Denis are constantly coming and going as they have for decades, their businesses and work ever evolving, the neighborhood's public space continues to be shaped by them more than by residents.

Epilogue

May 5, 2011

Three nights ago, on Monday, May 2, 2011, a man walked into Le Bosphore, a bar at 55 rue du Château-d'Eau, and fired two shots into the neck of the bartender, Mounir. The man walked out calmly, according to witnesses, and drove off.¹ As of today, he has not yet been apprehended by the police.

This is a rare event in the neighborhood. Murder and guns are two of the only things that are foreign in this part of Paris. For some who do not know the neighborhood well and think of it as a bad place, hearing about this event only reinforced their negative opinions of its streets. For those living in the area around the bar, it may serve only to further separate them from life on the street below.



Figure 1. The memorial for Mounir on the shutters of Le Bosphore, May 5, 2011.

¹ For the press coverage of the murder, see “Un serveur abattu dans un bar,” *Le Parisien* (Paris, May 4, 2011), <http://www.leparisien.fr/paris-75/un-serveur-abattu-dans-un-bar-04-05-2011-1434009.php>; “Un homme abattu dans un bar à Paris,” *Le Figaro* (Paris, May 3, 2011), <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2011/05/03/97001-20110503FILWWW00621-un-homme-abattu-dans-un-bar-a-paris.php>; Aurélie Sarrot, “Barman tué dans le Xe: le tireur se serait trompé de cible,” *Métro France* (Paris, May 3, 2011), <http://www.metrofrance.com/paris/barman-tue-dans-le-xe-le-tireur-se-serait-trompe-de-cible/mkec!4EvRZRcG0EqI/>.

Earlier tonight, as I walked by Le Bosphore, I witnessed an outpouring of emotion surrounding Mounir's death. The bar had closed out of respect for Mounir and its pulled-down metal shutters served as the site for an impromptu memorial created by his friends in the neighborhood. The same photocopied black-and-white grainy photo of his face was posted twice on top, surrounded in different messages posted by others. People taped flowers, still covered in their plastic from the flower shops, to the shutters, with a note attached to each bouquet (see Figure 2). His family responded to all of the memorials with their own handwritten note: "Thanks to all of you for your support. All of his family, especially his five children, thank you."

Nono, with whom I spoke down the street at La Ferme, was in shock. He told me that he had known Mounir for years, ever since Nono's family had run Le Château-d'Eau just a few doors down from Le Bosphore. He described Mounir as an affable guy who never gave anyone trouble and with whom he had always gotten along well. Nono told me the story as it had been told in the papers: a man who had been at the bar in the afternoon had gotten into a fight and was kicked out, though it was not clear if he had been fighting with the bartender or with another client. Supposedly the man had been high on cocaine and had seemed out of his mind. The man then came back to the bar at 11:30 that night, donning a ski-mask, and shot Mounir in retribution for the afternoon's events. An unwarranted, disgusting, and horrific response it was, especially considering Mounir had not even been the bartender on duty that afternoon.

As Nono was telling me the story, a waiter from the Turkish restaurant next door came by to have a quick beer outside the café during his break. He overheard us talking about Mounir. I asked him if he knew Mounir and he said of course he did. The waiter, who has been living and working in the Faubourg Saint-Denis since the 1970s, said that he had known him ever since Mounir had come to Paris from Istanbul twenty years ago. "Why did the asshole have to kill him? It is truly, truly horrible," the waiter said. It was clear that he had become upset thinking about the murder, and he finished his beer in one gulp and went back to work without saying goodbye.

Nono told me he was not afraid of anything similar happening to them at La Ferme. "As long as you always try to stay calm and avoid fights with people, you can't be afraid," he said. But, he noted, things had been different at Le Château-d'Eau. There they used to get many more addicts and crazy people coming into the bar. He attributed the change to the fifty meter he made move down the street—he said that at Le Château-d'Eau he would get all the foot traffic of drug users from the Gare du Nord and Gare de l'Est down the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis on their way to Les Halles. He thought that Le Bosphore probably received many of those clients, too, because they were located just next to the Château-d'Eau metro and because it was a place to gamble legally on horse racing and lotteries (a *PMU*), which always attracts a seedy bunch, he said.

When I walked back in front of Le Bosphore ten minutes later, the memorial had grown even bigger and made clear that even if the bar did attract drug addicts, it was also a community center for the neighborhood. Although Mounir was a Turk from Istanbul, the majority of the bouquets and notes came from the workers of the hair salons on the street. One expected to see

the note from the Parisian division of the Beşiktaş Jimnastik Kulübü, the fan club of Istanbul's most important soccer team, that read, in French:

Before this sorrowful twist of fate, we are both sad and disconcerted. We would like to bring a bit of comfort but, today, the words are escaping us.

In our hearts we will never forget you.

But one might be surprised, directly below it on the shutters, to find this note:

To Mounir,

May your soul rest in peace,

Miss Afro

signed by the African hair salon of the same name directly across the street. Or next to it, to see the note (see Figure 2):

Dear Mounir,

We offer our condolences to your family.

Your friends from Château d'Eau pray for peace for your soul and may the earth comfort you.

57 [rue du Château-d'Eau], Afro Cosmetics

Or a beautiful bouquet of purple lilies with the note:

A thought for you, Mounir, and for your family.

May your soul rest in peace,

ABSACE (Association des Salons et Beauté Afro du Château d'Eau)

Métro France, in a caption to the photo in their article (Figure 3), stated incorrectly, though perhaps not unsurprisingly, “the *residents* paid homage to the victim on Tuesday night” (italics mine). Mounir belonged to a community of quotidian in the neighborhood that was not defined by ethnic boundaries, religion, or native language, but rather by their daily experience in the space of the streets. His friends were of vastly different backgrounds, but what they did share were the streets of Château d'Eau.



Figure 2. Flowers left on the memorial by Afro Cosmetics, a hair salon at 57 rue du Château-d'Eau.



Figure 3. Earlier photo of the memorial, taken on May 3, and published in *Métro France*.²

² Sarrot, "Barman tué dans le Xe: le tireur se serait trompé de cible."

As I stood outside the bar, a 60-year-old Turkish man named Saïd walked up to the bar, surprised to see it closed. After examining the memorial for a few seconds, he started shaking and screaming: “It’s impossible! It’s impossible!” throwing his hands into the air. Two other men who had just come out from getting their hair done at one of the nearby salons were standing there with us, respectfully reading the notes to Mounir, unsure of how to respond to the screaming man. I told Saïd, in a very quiet voice, that I had never met Mounir, but that I heard from a number of people that he was a wonderful man. He told me, calmly and seriously, that he was the nicest, most gentle man and did not deserve what had happened to him. Mounir had five beautiful children, Saïd said, two from his first marriage with a French woman and three from his current marriage to a Russian woman, to whom Saïd had introduced him when they were working at a different bar down the street together years ago. “It’s not fair,” he told me.

Suddenly, like a clap of thunder, he lifted his arms up into the air and screamed out at the top of his lungs “SON OF A BITCH, MOTHER FUCKER.” With tears streaming down his face, he put his head on my shoulder and hugged me. A minute later, he looked up, thanked me, and left.



December 11, 2012

The Faubourg Saint-Denis will continue to evolve in the years to come. Most likely, as the press likes to suggest, it will have more fancy shops, trendy restaurants, and design firms located in its buildings. Its new residents and businesses will very likely have to pay increasingly large amounts of money per month to rent or to buy housing or commercial space in the area. It is even possible that what I have referred to as the Faubourg Saint-Denis as a common denominator for all the different conceptions of neighborhood will cease to be the best way to define this part of Paris. The rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis could become quiet and no longer function as the market street in the center of this complex, multifaceted part of Paris.

Despite all the attempts to calm the street and its neighborhood, it is unlikely that its commerce—and all the social interaction that comes along with it—will cease. Surely, people and industries will come and go, but there are few signs that Faubourg Saint-Denis is losing its attraction as a hub for many different groups of people and a variety of businesses. In fact, the neighborhood only appears to be getting louder. Even though much of the aggressive hawking of hair salons outside of the Château-d’Eau metro has lessened since 2010, black hair salons are packed both inside and out and continue to open at a rapid pace. After a recent rejuvenation of the Passage du Prado in 2012 with a number of its closed shops re-opening as hair salons, cafés, and grocery stores, the space feels alive again, filled with people who are not selling drugs. And, perhaps most telling, is that residents recently formed a new neighborhood organization to protest against the opening of the latest round of expensive bars, cafés, and restaurants on the

street.³ They, too, have disturbed the peace of residents by placing more tables and customers on the sidewalks at night, and have caused panic among others who are afraid that their neighborhood is changing too quickly and is losing its ethnic, economic, and social diversity. Just the day before the submission of this dissertation, the Mairie of the 10th arrondissement took unprecedented action to close five bars in the neighborhood—*Chez Jeanette* and *Le Mauri 7* on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, *L’Univers* on the rue d’Enghien, and *Au Xeme* and *L’Inconnu* on the rue de l’Echiquier—for a period of ten days.⁴ The residents’ insistent lobbying of the Mairie to act against nighttime street noise has achieved its first tangible result. Rémi Féraud, the mayor of the 10th arrondissement has taken up their cause: “We must give a clear signal that these abuses are no longer possible. The neighborhood is vibrant, but it is no longer possible to have groups of people every night on the sidewalks. They need to respect the residents so that the street remains pleasant. Our political program rests on three themes: security, cleanliness, and noise.”⁵ Whether the fear of future closures will have an effect on the life on the streets of the Faubourg Saint-Denis remains to be seen.

As long as the neighborhood continues to attract people to its streets, for whatever reason and regardless of who its users will be, the public space of the Faubourg Saint-Denis will continue to be the site of countless daily interactions and the creator of many unexpected relationships and communities, as it has been for so many of the people discussed in this book. By the structure of its public space—its architecture of small shops, narrow streets, and *passages*—along with the culture of the marketplace that pervades them, the neighborhood has demanded that its wide variety of users interact, work, and socialize together, regardless of the moment in time. While there have been and will continue to be examples of distinct groups—based on language, work, class, ethnicity, religion, or other interest—who use the Faubourg Saint-Denis and choose to stay apart from the rest, the space of the neighborhood and the mixed culture of using it make this an uphill battle. Mixing must be considered the norm, not the exception, in busy, urban marketplaces.

Although residents continue to exert great power on the development of the Faubourg Saint-Denis—there are no signs that their influence on and desire to participate in municipal politics is abating—the public space of the neighborhood is filled, as much as ever, with *quotidians* and other less frequent visitors. As with Mounir, Nono, Amadou, and countless other *quotidians*, their relationships forged in the space of the Faubourg Saint-Denis were some of the most significant in their lives. Even if the time they spent in the neighborhood was not with

³ See Rory Mulholland, “A Paris Street Battles for Its Soul,” *Agence France-Presse*, October 4, 2012, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hv-ZH-7XJ7Zj9z-KaxMnqUxEGdYA?docId=CNG.4cc966b23c1685cec8d5b98063a3470e.881>.

⁴ “Paris la nuit : fermeture simultanée de cinq bars du 10e arrondissement,” *Metro*, December 10, 2012, <http://www.metrofrance.com/paris/paris-la-nuit-fermeture-simultanee-de-cinq-bars-du-10e-arrondissement/mlj!ouWHLIMMkGAQI/>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

family or whom they would call their closest friends, these communities shaped and gave meaning to their everyday lives.

There is no reason to believe that the history of other vibrant neighborhoods in Paris and in other big cities has been much different. The ease of mobility within these metropolitan areas makes it unlikely that the communities that have been formed over the years in their public spaces would only have been made up of local residents. Quotidians must have played a substantial role in countless neighborhoods in cities all over the world dating back centuries, if not longer. Daily mobility in the city, while it has inspired fear in many, has given life to countless neighborhoods.

Parisians and people in other cities around the world also must have had significant ties to parts of the city far from their home. As in the protests against the destruction of the Les Halles pavilions when people from all over the region came to show their support for a neighborhood important to them, people living in and near cities everywhere have emotional ties with places in their local cities that might be far from their homes. Sometimes they have even risked arrest to show their love for parts of their city that make their lives meaningful. Neighborhoods in cities are by their very nature shared places, with so many unidentifiable people invested in them.

The relationships formed in the Faubourg Saint-Denis for many of the quotidians discussed in this book and for me, as well, have been real friendships, not just acquaintances made in passing. These relationships have often been made with people whom a historian would not necessarily suspect they knew. Mounir died in the neighborhood, one of his homes, and was mourned by his neighbors and friends on its streets. It is unfortunate that so many other quotidians like him who have made and will make important contributions to their neighborhoods and the lives of others in them, leave no trace of their presence in it, unless something tragic happens.

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