Summer 2014

Ce grand bastiment neuf et vieux': The Louvre Towards Political, Social and Urban Transformations in the *Grand Siècle*

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W HEN HENRI IV ENTERED INTO PARIS after defeating his
opponents on March 22, 1594, he was determined to make the
Louvre his chief residence, a bridge from the past to the future.
Not only did he have a novel vision, his intention was also to mark the reign
of the first Bourbon king with imposing structures where the new dynasty
would build on the Valois heritage. On his official entry into the city, the king
passed through the Porte Neuve adjacent to the old Tour de Bois and in front
of the entrance of the Louvre at the *guichet* of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois
towards the Porte Saint-Honoré where he received the keys to the city from
the Prévôt des Marchands; then, he followed the rue Saint-Honoré and rue des
Innocents on his way to the cathedral Notre-Dame for the *Te Deum*, display-
ing a Catholic attachment to ritual. Rather than a festive ceremony, however,
Henri IV's entry into Paris was a political and religious conquest of the capital
designed to legitimize him fully as the King of France.[1] On the *Plan de
Merian* (1615) and even on the later *Plan de Gomboust* (1652), one can
observe the old Porte Neuve and the Tour de Bois against the brand new
Grande Galerie du Louvre completed under the rule of Henri IV as shown on
an engraving by Israël Silvestre (Figure 1).[2] The juxtaposition of old and new
architectural forms must have surprised Parisians of this period, although the
Porte Neuve and the Tour de Bois that defined Charles V's wall were
destroyed only around 1660 when major building constructions of the Louvre
resumed under the reign of Louis XIV.

Starting from a topographical analysis of the Louvre but shifting the focus
from urban space to social and cultural interactions, I argue that the Louvre,
as both a physical and a political site, articulates a rather ambiguous connec-
tion between art, culture, and politics in the seventeenth century. The Louvre
represents royal authority; however, it is no longer the place in which new cul-
ture circulates. In some ways, the palace, often abandoned, suffers over the
course of the seventeenth century from a lack of interest and tends to lose its
dominant place as a site where novel cultural and social events take place. By
bringing together perspectives from art, literature, as well as urban and cul-
tural studies, my aim is not to do an analysis of the institutional history and
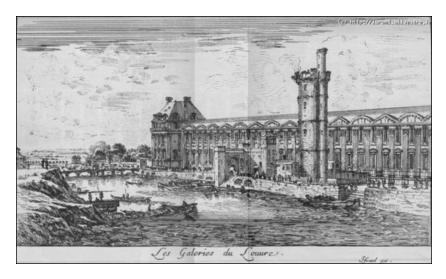
Figure 1. *Les Galeries du Louvre* (c. 1652), Israël Silvestre, Musée Carnavalet, Paris, France.

the architectural forms of the Louvre, but rather to question the relation between space and culture. To this end, I propose to examine important aspects of urban and social transformations as well as cultural practices in the seventeenth century in order to understand how the Louvre is located within a new kind of urban experience.

Mapping the Louvre

Bird's-eye view maps of Paris of the early seventeenth century—the *Plan de Vassalieu* (1609), the *Plan de Quesnel* (1609), and the *Plan de Merian* (1615)—make a startling break with the conventional north-south orientation of the Seine in the first generation of maps of the second half of the sixteenth century. In these later maps, the Seine crosses the map diagonally, thus allowing the cartographer to depict architectural landmarks in three dimensions. In fact, one can see how the monuments in the landscape are formed into hierarchies, the main buildings under the control of the state and the church being easily recognizable at first sight, thanks to the frontal elevation of the edifices and their exaggerated dimensions compared with the simplification of the rest of the urban landscape.

The *Plan de Merian* and its copy the *Plan de Tavernier* (1625) were without a doubt the most reproduced maps of the time.[3] If the topographical value

of the Merian map is relatively deficient, the architecture of the buildings is neat and enhanced by the effect of a slightly oblique view.[4] Although the Louvre of this period is geographically located at the city's western margins, the Merian map places the royal palace at the very foreground and directs attention to the most important Parisian landmark on the median axis of the map.[5] Moreover, this centralizing perspective of the Louvre directs the gaze of the observer on the one hand to the Bastille, the other main important symbol of the king's authority, through an oblique axis, and on the other hand following a vertical axis to the equestrian statue of Henri IV erected on the newly constructed Pont Neuf. By emphasizing Paris's status as the seat of royal power, the *Plan de Merian* functions as a political icon and an efficient instrument of royal propaganda. As John Brian Harley puts it: "Power is exerted *on* cartography."[6] To be precise, just like the *Plan de Vassalieu* and the *Plan de Quesnel*, the *Plan de Merian* showcases the monumental building Louvre-Tuileries—"un palais double"[7]—newly connected by the Grande Galerie, built between 1595 and 1608. This Grande Galerie constitutes not only the centerpiece of Henri IV's *grand dessein* for the Louvre, but also a remarkable landmark within the urban cityscape as highlighted on the Gomboust map of 1652. The two cartouches at the top corners give the key to reading the map: the cartouche on the left side ("Paris veu de Montmartre") represents a view of Montmartre which constitutes the highest viewpoint from which one can embrace the whole city as well as the ideal position from which to look at the Louvre; the other cartouche on the right ("Galerie du Louvre") displays the Grande Galerie as it embodies the whole royal palace itself.[8]

As noted above, within a few months after entering Paris in March 1594, Henri IV showed his intention to take up residence in the capital by resuming the alteration works of the Louvre in accordance with the Valois building plan. Until then, the civil war had prevented the crown from continuing construction on the Louvre as conceived by Henri II and Charles IX. But Henri IV's idea was more ambitious as it included the Louvre within a vast architectural and urban development plan according to a *grand dessein*, the royal residence being at the center of an effort to consolidate the power of the crown and create a modern state.[9] Henri IV had in mind to quadruple the size of the courtyard known as "la Cour carrée" and to link the Louvre and the Tuileries by two long wings and a succession of courtyards. Nevertheless, this ambitious project was not to be completed (and it would be realized only under Napoléon Bonaparte), for Ravaillac assassinated the king on May 10, 1610. Little was done during the early years of Louis XIII's reign until 1624 when the king decided to take over the site abandoned since the death of his father.

Under the direction of Clément Métezeau, the building project of the western wing of the squared courtyard was resumed with the addition of a new wing adjacent to the Lescot wing as shown on the *Plan de Tavernier*,[10] but yet again the works soon had to be interrupted in 1626 for of a lack of money, France being actively involved in the Thirty Years War (1618-48). It is only in 1638 with the nomination of a new Surintendant des Bâtiments, François Sublet de Noyers, that the *grand dessein* of the Louvre was to be resurrected. Under the direction of Jacques Lemercier, the architect in charge of building an elevation on the Lescot wing, a large pavilion was envisaged in the center of the western wing (the Pavillon de Sully, formerly called Pavillon de l'Horloge) with a symmetrical extension of the Lescot wing in the same Renaissance style.[11] However, the erection of the north wing was interrupted by the death of Richelieu followed a few months later by the death of the king. Although Louis XIII wished to make the Louvre his primary residence, he hardly lived in his palace because of the continual constructions and because the Louvre was not truly adapted to contemporary standards of comfort.

For this reason, his widow Anne d'Autriche, along with her two surviving children, resided in the Palais Cardinal, bequeathed to the crown by Richelieu and known henceforth as the Palais Royal.[12] However, after the epic episode of the Fronde and their return to the capital, the Queen and her children chose to live in the Louvre for security reasons. The last major building project of the Louvre during the seventeenth century was the completion of the Cour carrée, marked especially by the construction of the monumental east façade dominated by a prominent peristyle with double columns, the famous Colonnade, reflecting the royal grandeur of Louis XIV. Claude Perrault designed the Colonnade, after former French architectural projects as well as a design by Bernini were rejected.[13] Completed in 1672, the Colonnade looking out towards the city was the new landmark of admiration but, nevertheless, in 1674, the Sun King abandoned his Parisian palace for Versailles, leaving behind him a still unfinished building.[14]

Colbert, Louis XIV's Surintendant des Finances, was conscious of the symbolic value of the Louvre as the seat of royal power in the capital. While Louis XIV was investing all his time, energy, and money in building Versailles, Colbert reminded him that the Louvre was undoubtedly the most beautiful palace in the world and the most deserving of the greatness of the king: "Pendant que Votre Majesté a dépensé de très grandes sommes en cette maison, elle a négligé le Louvre, qui est assurément le plus superbe palais qu'il y ait au monde, et le plus digne de la grandeur de Votre Majesté."[15]In fact, the objection of Colbert—"[Votre Majesté] a négligé le Louvre"—is in

many ways emblematic of the condition of the Louvre during the seventeenth century. From the time of Henri IV's *grand dessein*, modeled in turn on Henri II's design, until the decision of Louis XIV to move the court to Versailles, the renovations to the Louvre were resumed and then abandoned several times.

In this connection, the engravings of the Louvre by Israël Silvestre are significant, for they show the royal palace abandoned, with incomplete facades stretching up into the void, and rooms without windows and roofing. Likewise, Claude Le Petit, in *La chronique scandaleuse ou Paris ridicule* (circa 1660), alludes to the neglected aspects of the Louvre:

Vois, Muse, comme il nous decouvre,
Pensant nous éblouïr les yeux,
Ce grand bastiment neuf et vieux,
Qu'on appelle aujourd'huy le Louvre?
Vois-en les murs si mal rangez,
Par l'antiquité tous rongez?
Ces chambres, cette Galerie?
C'est là que dame Vollupté
Fait une infame fripperie
Des juppes de grand'qualité.[16]

This poem recalls another poem written by the Abbé de Marolles who evokes the Louvre as a building "qui demeure imparfait."[17] In his memoirs, the same author describes the Louvre in these terms: "Je ne veux rien dire davantage des édifices de cette grande Ville, ni de ce qu'on allegue, sur ce propos, des imperfections de la Maison roïale du Louvre, qui seroit à la vérité le plus beau Bâtiment du monde, s'il étoit achevé. Je crois que nos Rois ont été occupés à de bien plus grandes pensées."[18] In the same way, Voltaire is indignant that still in the middle of the eighteenth century the elegant Colonnade of the Louvre is hidden by the very old buildings nearby: "On passe devant le Louvre, et on gémit de voir cette façade, monument de la grandeur de Louis XIV, du zèle de Colbert, et du génie de Perrault, cachée par des bâtiments de Goths et de Vandales."[19]

On the whole, the Louvre of the seventeenth century appears on maps as an architectural entity that embodies royal power and cultural prestige. However, in art and literature, the Louvre is often depicted as an abandoned building full of imperfections.

The Louvre within the new cityscape of Paris

Under the reign of Henri IV, a surge of urban development took place in Paris, which was greatly in need of embellishment and repair after the wars of

religion and the damages incurred during the siege of the city. As part of a political unification agenda, Henri IV's building program in Paris encompassed numerous projects: the creation of new kinds of public places, mainly the Place Dauphine (1605) and the Place Royale (1607); the construction of the Hôpital Saint-Louis (1607); the renovation of several wharves, gates and ports; the completion of the Pont Neuf; and, of course, the expansion of the royal palace, including the completion of the Grande Galerie, "dite du bord de l'eau" (Ballon 15-56).

Eventually, the Grande Galerie asserted itself as an architectural landmark, largely for its distinctive and very long façade that linked the Louvre to the Tuileries. Furthermore, this landmark was better experienced in relation to its surroundings, mainly the Pont Neuf, the newest bridge crossing the river Seine and standing by the western point of the Île de la Cité, and the triangular Place Dauphine right next to it. Started in 1578 under the reign of Henri III, the erection of the Pont Neuf was fully completed in January 1604.

The Pont Neuf truly transformed the urban experience by facilitating the connection between the right and the left banks, and particularly access to the royal palace.[20] Indeed, the bridge was so closely identified as a pathway for accessing the Louvre that, although we have forgotten it today, this bridge was once called the "Pont du Louvre."[21]

Because it was built of stone rather than wood, and because of its striking architectural features, the newly constructed Pont Neuf constituted a powerful image and imposed a strong identity, being the focal point of one of the best viewpoints of Paris. In that sense, it is not surprising that the bridge has become a perfect structure against which the Louvre stands out. In the seventeenth century, this urban space was the most often represented urban landmark by far. In fact, the many engravings entitled "Perspective du Pont Neuf" or "Veüe du Pont Neuf" emphasize in an exaggerated way the close link between the royal palace and the Pont Neuf thanks to a foreshortening effect that accentuates the proximity of the bridge to the Louvre (Figure 2). The Pont Neuf with its remarkable equestrian statue of Henri IV[22] and the Grande Galerie are interrelated so as to form an identifiable space that subjugates the urban landscape to the royal authority.[23] What more particularly holds one's attention is that on most of these engravings the Louvre seems to be an almost purely architectural structure compared to the heavy traffic and activity on the Pont Neuf. In other cases, the Pont Neuf occupies the main focal point of view so much that the distinguished architecture of the Louvre disappears in the cityscape. One striking example is the cover page of the English version of Germain Brice's *Description nouvelle de ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable*

Figure 2. *Veüe et perspective du Pont-Neuf de Paris* (c. 1650), Adam Pérelle, Musée Carnavalet, Paris, France.

dans la ville de Paris (1684) on which the royal palace is not represented at all, the depiction of the Pont Neuf occupying the whole frontispice.[24]

The Pont Neuf quickly established itself as a highly frequented destination and a cultural landmark: a place to enjoy the spectacle of urban life and to experience street culture, a public space for seeing and being seen. In fact, the Pont Neuf was at this time the widest bridge in Paris with pavement on both sides to allow the flow of *badauds*, *crieurs*, and street charlatans, and a large traffic lane to accommodate the heavy circulation of coaches and *chaises à porteurs* (Sauval, vol. 1, book 3, 232). As Karen Newman puts it: "the Pont Neuf was the privileged sign of seventeenth-century Parisian modernity" (Newman 34), essentially because Parisians could observe the city while moving through it. In that respect, what distinguished the Pont Neuf from others in the city was for the most part the absence of houses and shops on the bridge, a novelty at that time, when bridges were usually lined on both sides with multi-level buildings. At the starting point of the project, the Pont Neuf

was supposed to accommodate houses and shops, but in 1601 Henri IV decided to go against the will of the municipality (Pillorget 275) in favor of an open plan with no rows of buildings to obscure the view of the Louvre.

Therefore, the Pont Neuf offered the most perfect view of Paris, especially of the newly erected Louvre's Grande Galerie running along the Seine. With respect to the Pont Neuf, Germain Brice observes, "C'est de là qu'on découvre en partie ce que la Ville a de plus magnifique" (Brice 1:159).

In short, the new urban space created by the Pont Neuf made the Louvre a more prominent architectural landmark. When Louis Le Vau, Louis XIV's principal architect, received the order to build the Collège des Quatre-Nations (today's location of the Institut de France), also known as the Collège Mazarin after its founder to ensure his posthumous glory and political legacy, he proposed to erect the Collège on the site of the old Tour and Porte de Nesle on the left bank opposite the Louvre: "près la porte de Nesle vis-à-vis du Louvre, auquel lieu on pourrait faire une place publique qui servirait d'ornement à l'aspect de Louvre."[25] The architectural ensemble of the Collège des Quatre-Nations attracts the attention of Germain Brice who notes: "Le tout ensemble forme une décoration, qui ne contribue pas peu à l'embellissement du Louvre, qui est directement vis-à-vis de l'autre côté de la riviere" (Brice 1:115). As Jean-Pierre Babelon has pointed out, the architectural design of the Collège des Quatre-Nations was intended to enhance the Louvre:

It needed the eye of a visionary architect to imagine that an old tower and rampart perched on the irregular bank of the river and at the right angles along a ditch full of fast-flowing water could make way for an esplanade overlooking the Seine, the location of a theatre-like structure offering the most magnificent vista to the royal apartments of the Louvre.[26]

Taking advantage of the Seine scenery, the new setting composed by the Louvre and its Grande Galerie, the Pont Neuf, and the Collège des Quatre-Nations would contribute to the creation of an "imageable landscape,"[27] a landmark that became identifiable with the image of Paris and with a new urban experience.

Novel spaces competing with the Louvre

What Henri IV had in mind when he envisioned the grand dessein of the Louvre was not only to extend and embellish the residence of the king, but also to make the Louvre "a forum for diplomatic and cultural activity in the capital" (Ballon 44). In that respect, the Grande Galerie du Louvre was conceived as a long *promenoir* from which the king and his court could take advantage of the privileged view on the Seine,[28] but above all as an artistic

foyer. Indeed, Henri IV created the new charge of Valet du Roi for nineteen artists, "Les illustres," who would be free from corporative tutelage.[29] In the end, the project was not a total success as Henri Sauval testifies with a critical eye in his *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris*:

Une colonie de Peintres, de Sculpteurs, d'Architectes, de Tapissiers & autres semblables, occupent tout ce qu'il y a de logement dessous cette galerie. Ces divers appartemens avoient été destinés par Henri IV. pour les Artisans les plus renommés: car le dessein de ce Prince étoit de loger dans son Louvre les plus grands Seigneurs, & les plus excellens Maîtres du Royaume, afin de faire comme une alliance de l'esprit & des beaux arts, avec la noblesse & l'épée […]. Mais comme de tout tems la faveur a eu plus de partisans que le merite; depuis, quantité de gens sans nom s'y sont glissés, & ont usurpé ces nobles demeures & illustres, ce qui a donné lieu au proverbe, *Que tous les bons Maîtres ne logent pas à la galerie du Louvre*. (Sauval, vol. 2, book 7, 40-41)

Throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, in a Louvre where favor tends to be increasingly more important than merit, and where hypocrisy and intrigue leave no room for virtue, little by little the cultural influence of the royal palace was overshadowed by novel urban spaces conceived as real forums for cultural and social activities. Through an analysis of the role and functions of two distinctive cultural spaces characteristic of this period, the salons held in *hôtels particuliers* and newly constructed palaces (mainly the Palais Cardinal), I want to demonstrate that the Louvre was no longer the pre-eminent space where a "new culture," the cultural avant-garde, circulated.

The *hôtels particuliers*

In 1599, Henri IV appointed his superintendent Sully as Grand Voyer (grand commissioner of highways and public works), and, in 1602, he granted him the title of Surintendant des Bâtiments. As city-planners, Henri IV and Sully encouraged the growth of districts with the building of numerous aristocratic townhouses, especially in neighborhoods like the Marais, the Île Saint-Louis, and the Pré-aux-Clercs. These newly constructed *hôtels particuliers* were sumptuous, and they overshadowed the old château of the capital, being themselves often compared to palaces. Arnold Van Buchen notices in his journal, "Il y a dans le même quartier [the quartier Saint-Antoine] un grand nombre d'hôtels de seigneurs et de gentilshommes; certains sont de vrais palais, par exemple celui de Navarre, celui de Guise, celui de Nesles" (Van Langeraad and Vidier 116).

This urban development was a visible sign of social progress, defining a novel configuration of space. Indeed, the *hôtel particulier*, with its elaborate suite of doorways and courtyards, was a particular type of structure—more

private and comfortable than the official setting of the Louvre—that inaugurated an urban experience reflected in social interactions such as the *salon* that would become over time a French cultural institution. Always hosted by a woman in her private house, the salons brought together a learned and mannered assembly of people who met to discuss literature, perform plays and *jeux d'esprit* by demonstrating wit and brilliance, all kinds of literary and social activities that defined good taste and a new sense of urbanity.[30] During the Ancien Régime, aristocratic women held salons as an exclusive space that dictated manners and taste, essentially through the art of conversation.[31] With the proliferation of salons in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Paris came to be known as the city of conversation,[32] and therefore played a leading role in the process of the "civilisation des mœurs."[33]

One of the first salons in the early seventeenth century was hosted by Catherine de Vivonne de Savelli, marquise de Rambouillet, known as Arthénice—an anagram of Catherine apparently created by Malherbe. Her *hôtel particulier*, which she completely designed by herself, revolutionizing the interior design of the period, was located in the former district of "Le Carrousel," on the rue Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre, next to the Louvre. [34] Tallemant des Réaux recounts that at the age of twenty Madame de Rambouillet decided to distance herself from the court because she thought its manners were gross and rustic.[35]

Gatherings run by Madame de Rambouillet were held in her famous blue bedroom (*chambre bleue*) and were frequented by a fairly socially diverse group of women and men, a mix of old nobility (*noblesse d'épée*) and new nobility (*noblesse de robe*) drawn from the highest offices of various occupational groups.[36] More specifically, the salon, where *otium* was preferred to *negotium*, intentionally distanced itself from the official life of the court and the erudite cabinets exclusively frequented by men.[37] The elite society of the salons was a condensed group of the most polite people of the court, including renowned *gens de lettres*, where the value of merit and *galanterie* were more important than rank.[38] Recounting the life of Jean Ogier de Gombauld, Valentin Conrart gives superiority to the crowd of the hôtel de Rambouillet defined as a select court compared with the court at the Louvre: "Il [Gombauld] se rendit encore avec plus de soin et de plaisir au délicieux réduit de toutes les personnes de qualité et de mérite qui furent alors; je veux dire *à l'hôtel de Rambouillet, qui était comme une cour choisie, moins nombreuse, mais, si j'ose le dire, plus exquise que celle du Louvre*."[39] Moreover, the Jesuit Pierre Le Moyne describes Madame de Rambouillet's salon as "the court of the court" (Craveri 35). There is no doubt that contemporaries perceived the

blue room of Arthénice as an alternative court society, which was superior to the one that frequented "les assemblées du Louvre."

It might be expected that the space of culture and civility would be the Louvre where the elite of society navigated following the model of small courts in Italy in the sixteenth century where Baldassare Castiglione got his inspiration for his *Il libro del cortegiano* [*The Book of the Courtier*] published in 1528. However, in France, in the first decades of the seventeenth century, the elite spaces for literary culture do not necessarily intersect with those where the power of the court was exercised. An autonomous culture blossoms in a new social space defined by the salons, an area of freedom away from the Louvre. Rightly, Jean-François Solnon talks about this period of a crisis of the court culture.[40]

In a word, the space created by Madame de Rambouillet offered an ideal model of the court where attendees were acting like the refined shepherds of the novel *L'Astrée*, a best-seller by Honoré d'Urfé read aloud in the famous blue room as it, too, served as a real guide to civility and politeness. It is not at all surprising that many years later Madame de Sévigné, who used to be a regular of the salon de Rambouillet during her youth, claims in one of her letters to her daughter that "the Hôtel de Rambouillet was the Louvre."[41] In remembering her salon experience, Madame de Sévigné mixes *la cour* and *la ville*, which become indistinguishable spaces to the extent that the hôtel de Rambouillet comes to supplant the Louvre.

Modern palaces in the capital

Often in the guidebooks of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the description of the Louvre is laconic, as it is the royal residence and no more needs to be said about it: "Rien ne sert de decrire ce palais. Sachez que c'est la demeure des rois."[42] In that regard, Étienne Cholet in his *Remarques singulières de Paris* mentions briefly the Louvre, "Chateau Royal," followed by a lengthy description of the Palais des Tuileries in which he praises its "structure admirable," "la beauté [...] de cette Maison Royale, la rareté de l'escalier suspendu en l'air, & d'autres singularitez agréables à l'œil."[43] Contemporary palaces like the Palais des Tuileries held the attention of observers because they constituted new landmarks within the capital, archetypal of perfect modern architecture contrasting with the irregular design of the Louvre. For this reason, the Louvre, which in the first half of the seventeenth century was characterized by large-scale urban development plans, had to compete with newly constructed palaces that were at the heart of several *quartiers neufs* and in turn part of the transformation of the urban landscape of Paris.

In the comedy *Le Menteur* (1644) by Pierre Corneille, the main character Dorante, a young man who left his provincial town of Poitiers to come to Paris, asserts:

Paris semble à mes yeux un pays de romans.
J'y croyois ce matin voir une île enchantée:
Je la laissai déserte, et la trouve habitée;
Quelque Amphion nouveau, sans l'aide des maçons,
En superbes palais a changé ses buissons.

To which his father Géronte replies:

Paris voit tous les jours de ces Métamorphoses.
Dans tout le Pré-aux-Clercs tu verras mêmes choses,
Et l'Univers entier ne peut rien voir d'égal
Aux superbes dehors du Palais-Cardinal.
Toute une ville entière avec pompe bâtie
Semble d'un vieux fossé par miracle sortie.[44]

In comparing the transformations of Paris to a magical metamorphosis, Corneille makes two references to novel urban developments. First, he refers to the Pré-aux-Clercs, which used to be a wasteland outside the wall of Philippe Auguste and which will become part of the Faubourg Saint-Germain-des-Prés, a new municipal neighborhood created under the reign of Louis XIV. It is precisely in this area that the famous Marguerite de Valois, the first wife of Henri IV who came to be known as la Reine Margot, settled down opposite the Louvre in a sumptuous building overlooking the Seine[45] she had commissioned around 1605, thus stimulating a sudden construction boom in the neighborhood where numerous *hôtels particuliers* were built.[46] Ten years later, on a site further south of the Pré-aux-Clercs, Marie de Medici commissioned a new palace—known today as the Palais du Luxembourg, seat of the Sénat—designed by the architect Salomon de Brosse on the model of the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. The presence of this palace on the left bank also encouraged the urban development of the capital to blossom in a new neighborhood called "Le Luxembourg." While the Queen mother wanted to create a space that would embody a new dynasty and symbolize the glory of her prestigious family, she also tried to install a rival power outside the Louvre where she really never felt at ease, especially when her relationship with her son Louis XIII was one of open hostility.

In addition, Corneille refers to the newly constructed Palais Cardinal, residence of Richelieu, Louis XIII's Prime Minister, built between 1624 and

1639 and designed by the architect Jacques Lemercier. The construction of this city palace against the bulwark called the "enceinte des fossés-jaunes" was the starting point of a large urban development plan promoted by the Cardinal Richelieu himself in order to urbanize the vacant land in the western part of the city and create a new neighborhood. After praising the beauty of Richelieu's residence with its galeries, remarkable gardens, library, and *cabinet de peintures*, Henri Sauval notes: "Ce lieu superbe étoit regardé comme le dernier effort de la magnificence" (Sauval, vol. 2, book 7, 172). The site chosen by the Prime Minister was strategic, for it was opposite the Louvre. The *Plan de Gomboust* emphasizes the proximity between the Palais Cardinal and the Louvre, and "clarifies the relationship"[47] of the two palaces to the extent that the Palais Cardinal was perceived as an extension of the Louvre. Regarding the Palais Cardinal, Alexandre Gady clearly states, "Richelieu a fait aménager par Lemercier des espaces semi-publics, la salle de la Comédie et la bibliothèque, qui contribuent à faire de sa demeure une succursale du Louvre—en plus moderne" (Gady 42).

Especially appealing was the construction in Richelieu's own residence of a large theater capable of hosting about 3,000 spectators. Moreover, "La Grande Salle de la Comédie" was the first structure to have a permanent stage in Paris, planned for that purpose and specifically conceived for special stage effects. This theater was a real novelty in France and reflected royal greatness as Henri Sauval observes it: "La maniere de ce Théatre est moderne. [...] Il n'y a personne qui n'avoue que c'est le Theatre de France le plus commode, & le plus Royal" (Sauval, vol. 2, book 7, 162-63).[48] Recent scholarship has highlighted the main features of this new Roman architecture of which the Cardinal could be proud: an amphitheater and two balconies for the spectators, a monumental scenic frame, a system of scenery changes on *telari* with a Baroque perspective stage, and the most modern and sophisticated stage machinery invented in Italy.[49] Richelieu's main artistic adviser and collaborator at that time, Mazarin, with the help of his agent and secretary Elpidio Benedetti, brought the most talented Roman artists and technicians—among them Gian Maria Mariana, a pupil of the famous Gian Lorenzo Bernini—to work in France for the Cardinal.[50] For the inauguration of his theater, Richelieu had commissioned a *tragi-comédie* by the playwright Jean Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, *Mirame*, performed January 14, 1641. The highlight of the performance was the effect of the sun machinery staged by Mariani based on the model of his master Bernini for a *drama per musica* performed in the private theater of the Barberini's palace in Rome.[51] Thus, the most avant-garde French theater was being staged in Richelieu's residence and not at the

Louvre. In that regard, a remarkable grisaille by Juste d'Egmont testifies to a performance of *La prospérité des armes de la France*, an allegorical ballet staged in the Grande Salle du Palais Cardinal in February 1641 in honor of the marriage of the duc d'Enghien and Mademoiselle de Brézé, niece of Richelieu. In the foreground, Louis XIII is sitting with Queen Anne of Austria and the young Louis XIV on his left, and Richelieu on his right. Louis XIII whose left hand is directed towards the stage seems to be discussing the performance with Richelieu; more specifically, as a result of the grisaille's whole composition, the king's hand points directly to the Cardinal's head, thus emphasizing the presence of the Cardinal sitting casually on a stool next to the king in his own "royal" theater. Richelieu is hosting the king for a staging experience in which all the novel techniques of machine theater are deployed: scene changes, flying machines, and other special effects.

Since the Valois dynasty, most of the court ballets in the French tradition, inaugurated with the *Ballet comique de la Reine* (1581) by Balthazar de Beaujoyeux, when produced in Paris were often performed in the Louvre's Salle des Gardes, located on the second floor of the west wing above the salle des Suisses.[52] If Tomaso Francini, a hydraulic engineer trained by Giulio Parigi and Giovan Battista Aleotti and in charge of *les eaux et fontaines* at the court as well as the scenery for royal entertainments,[53] introduced in France the first techniques for the use of machines in theatrical events, in reality the Grande Salle du Louvre was not equipped to welcome the most advanced machinery techniques. With the erection of the "Grande salle de la Comédie" within the Palais Cardinal, the city of Paris could pride itself on having the first theater equipped for machine plays outside of Italy. There is little doubt that Richelieu wanted to make of Paris a new Rome.[54] For that purpose, he became a real patron of the arts and letters, and an especially strong supporter of the French theater.[55] Moreover, the genius of the Cardinal's plan was to associate Italian and French artists, which allowed this cultural and technical knowledge from abroad to pass from the court theaters into the city theaters.[56]

In conclusion, it is no surprise that the Louvre as the official residence of the king in the *grand siècle* before the move of Louis XIV to Versailles appears on maps and engravings as an architectural landmark that embodies royal power as well as artistic and cultural prestige. In this respect, the physical representation of the Louvre has often been manipulated to reinforce the image of the king's authority. We have also seen how the topographical site of the Louvre greatly benefited from major urban transformations of Paris during the first decades of the seventeenth century, thus creating a powerful

image of the royal palace and a strong identity as well as being at the geographical center of a new urban experience. However, if we look closer from the inside, the Louvre as a forum for cultural events and activities is much more at the margins, overshadowed by novel spaces (*hôtels particuliers* and new palaces) and institutions (patronage of the arts) better suited for promoting new cultural practices that are autonomous and separate from the official culture. This cultural shift reflects the rise of a public sphere, and the creation of a new literary and cultural field, which is related to the idea of mapping of cultures onto different social spaces.[57] The Louvre as a dominant architectural entity in the Parisian cityspace is not the place of the cultural avant-garde, even though kings consecutively from François Ier to Louis XIV had in mind to remodel and adapt the royal palace to modern comfort, and to create a site for a living culture. Indeed, building the Louvre always seems to be a never-ending process. As Pierre Rosenberg, President-Director of the Louvre between 1994 and 2001, puts it: "Le Louvre ne s'achèvera jamais. S'il s'achevait, il serait mort."[58]

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Notes

1. See René Pillorget, "L'entrée d'Henri IV dans Paris le 22 mars 1594," *Nouvelle histoire de Paris: Paris sous les premiers Bourbons 1594-1661* (Paris: Hachette, 1988), 11-15; Anne Thoroval, "L'entrée d'Henri IV dans Paris (22 mars 1594)," *Promenades sur les lieux de l'histoire d'Henri IV à mai 1968* (Paris: Éditions Parigramme, 2004), 8-13; Ann W. Ramsey, "The Ritual Meaning of Henri IV's 1594 Parisian Entry," in *French Ceremonial Entries in the Sixteenth Century: Event, Image, Text*, Nicolas Russell and Hélène Visentin, eds. (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies 11, 2007), 189-205.
2. Several Dutch artists depicted the Porte Neuve and the Tour de Bois standing out against the newly constructed Grande Galerie; see the paintings by Abraham de Verwer (*Galerie du Louvre and the Porte Neuve*, c. 1640, Paris, Musée du Louvre) and Reinier Zeeman (*Ansicht der Seine mit Südfassade der Grande Galerie des Louvre*, c. 1650, Paris, Musée du Louvre).
3. Jean Boutier, *Les plans de Paris des origines (1493) à la fin du XVIIIᵉ siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2002), 121-29. For an analysis of the geometrical construction of the plan of Paris by Matthieu Merian, see Catherine Bousquet-Bressolier, "Le plan de Paris de Matthieu Merian (1615): lectures d'un document et altérations de son message au cours de la première moitié du XVIIᵉ siècle," in *Le monde des cartes*, 171 (2002): 19-31. For an analysis of this map's function as a utopia of the city, see Louis Marin, "Le portrait de la ville dans ses utopiques," *Utopiques: Jeux d'espaces* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1973), 257-74.
4. Pierre Pinon, *Les plans de Paris: histoire d'une capitale* (Paris: Le Passage, 2004), 42.
5. See the *Plan de Merian*, http://z.umn.edu/lx7 (accessed March 15, 2011).
6. "Deconstructing the Map," *Cartographica*, 26:2 (1989): 1-20.
7. Jean-Pierre Babelon, "Le Louvre: demeure des rois, temple des arts," in *Les lieux de mémoire*, vol. 2, Pierre Nora, ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), 1803-29.
8. For an analysis of the *Plan de Gomboust*, see Louis Marin, "Le roi et son géomètre," *Le portrait du roi* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1981), 209-20.

9. See Hilary Ballon, *The Paris of Henri IV: Architecture and Urbanism* (New York: The Architectural History Foundation/Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), 1; chapter 1 is devoted to the Louvre, 15-56.

10. See Françoise Siguret, *L'œil surpris: perception et représentation dans la 1ère moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1993), 101-07.

11. Alexandre Gady, *Jacques Lemercier, architecte et ingénieur du Roi* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2005), 369-81.

12. See Madame de Motteville, *Mémoires*, year 1644, in *Nouvelle collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France depuis le XIIIe siècle jusqu'à la fin du XVIIIe*, vol. 10, M. Michaud, ed. (Lyon and Paris: Guyot Frères, 1853), 64.

13. Projects for the east façade are reproduced in Geneviève Bresc Bautier, *The Louvre: An Architectural History* (New York: The Vendome Press, 1995), 68-69.

14. For more information on Louis XIV's Louvre between 1667 and the late 1670s, see Robert W. Berger, *The Palace of the Sun: The Louvre of Louis XIV* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania U P, 1993).

15. Quoted from Yvonne Singer-Lecocq, *Quand les artistes logeaient au Louvre, 1608-1835* (Paris: Perrin, 1998), 102.

16. In *Paris ridicule et burlesque au dix-septième siècle par Claude Le Petit, Berthod, Scarron, François Colletet, Boileau, etc.*, P. L. Jacob, ed. (Paris: Adolphe Delahays, 1859), 6-7.

17. *Descriptions de Paris en quatrains*, in *Paris ridicule et burlesque*, 6.

18. *Mémoires de Michel de Marolles abbé de Villeloin avec des notes historiques et critiques*, vol. 2 (Amsterdam: 1755), 290.

19. Voltaire, "Des embellissements de Paris, 1739," *Recueil de pièces en vers et en prose, par l'auteur de la tragédie de Séminaris* (Amsterdam: 1750).

20. See Karen Newman, *Cultural Capitals: Early Modern London and Paris* (Princeton: Princeton U P, 2007), especially chap. 2: "Toward a Topographic Imaginary," 34-59; Joan DeJean, *How Paris Became Paris: The Invention of the Modern City* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), chap. 1, "The Bridge Where Paris Became Modern: The Pont Neuf," 21-44.

21. See Henri Sauval, *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris*, vol. 1, book 3 (Paris: Chez Charles Moette et Jacques Chardon, 1724), 232 ; L. A. Van Langeraad and A. Vidier, "Description de Paris par Arnold Van Buchel d'Utrecht (1585-1586)," *Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris*, vol. 26 (1899), 121.

22. Louis XIII commissioned the equestrian statue of Henri IV, the first of its kind in the capital, after the assassination of his father. Located halfway across where the bridge intersects with the entry to the Place Dauphine on the Île de la Cité, the statue was inaugurated in 1614.

23. See the paintings by Hendrick Mommers (*Le Louvre vu du Pont Neuf*, c. 1666, Paris, Musée du Louvre) and Jean-Baptiste Raguenet (*Vue de Paris depuis le Pont Neuf*, 1763, Paris, Musée du Louvre).

24. *A New Description of Paris* (London: Henry Bonwicke, 1687). The frontispiece is reproduced in Newman, *Cultural Capitals*, 36.

25. Bernard Rouleau, *Paris: histoire d'un espace* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), 232.

26. Jean-Pierre Babelon, "Louis Le Vau at the Collège Mazarin: Rome in Paris?": http://z.umn.edu/lwi (accessed March 23, 2011).

27. Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1960; repr., Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), 91.

28. Thomas Platter, "Mais le plus principal embellissement qu'il [Henri IV] a fait consiste en une construction très élégante en marbre sculpté, qui va du palais jusqu'à son jardin de plaisance, situé en dehors de la ville, 'les Tuileries,' que l'on appelle également la 'Maison de la reine.' Le long de cet édifice on établira une galerie, où le roi pourra se rendre de son palais à son jardin, et d'où il pourra, en se promenant, voir tout ce qui se passe sur la Seine." "Description de Paris en 1599 par Thomas Platter," 190-91.

29. See Singer-Lecocq, *Quand les artistes logeaient au Louvre*.

30. On the cultural phenomenon of salons in the seventeenth century, see Myriam Maître, *Les précieuses: naissance des femmes de lettres en France au XVIIe siècle* (1999) (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2008); and Faith E. Beasley, *Salons, History, and the Creation of 17th-Century France: Mastering Memory* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

31. See Elizabeth Goldsmith, *Exclusive Conversations: The Art of Interaction in Seventeenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: U of Philadelphia P, 1988); Marc Fumaroli, "La conversation," in *Les lieux de mémoire*, vol. 3, 678-743; Benedetta Craveri, *The Age of Conversation* (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2005).

32. Germaine de Staël, "De l'esprit de conversation," in *De l'Allemagne* (1813): "Il me semble reconnu que Paris est la ville du monde où l'esprit et le goût de la conversation sont le plus généralement répandus."

33. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969 [*Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, 1939]).

34. As Eric Hazan notices, the street Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre would pass today by the pyramid of Ieoh Ming Pei. See *L'invention de Paris: il n'y a pas de pas perdus* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), 39.

35. "La Marquise de Rambouillet," *Historiettes* (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1906), 101.

36. Carolyn Lougee, *Le Paradis des femmes: Women, Salons, and Social Stratification in 17th-Century France* (Princeton: Princeton U P, 1976).

37. *Le loisir lettré à l'âge classique*, Marc Fumaroli, Philippe-Joseph Salazar, and Emmanuel Bury, eds. (Geneva: Droz, 1996).

38. Maurice Magendie, *La politesse mondaine et les théories de l'honnêteté, en France au XVIIe siècle, de 1600 à 1660* (1925) (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1993); and Emmanuel Bury, *Littérature et politesse: L'invention de l'honnête homme 1580-1750* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1996).

39. Extract from the "Avertissement" written by Conrart at the beginning of the works by Jean Ogier de Gombauld; quoted from Auguste Bourgoin, *Un bourgeois de Paris lettré au XVIIᵉ siècle: Valentin Conrart, premier secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie Française, et son temps* (Paris: Hachette, 1883), 233-34. Italics mine.

40. *La cour de France* (Paris: Fayard, 1987), 261-65.

41. Letter dated 12 January 1680; quoted from Joan DeJean, "The Salons, 'Preciosity,' and the Sphere of Women's Influence," in *A New History of French Literature*, Denis Hollier et al., eds. (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1989), 298.

42. Antoine de Rombise, *Itinerarii per diversa Galliæ...* (1639); quoted from Michèle and Michel Chaillou, *Petit guide pédestre de la littérature française au XVIIᵉ siècle 1600-1660* (Paris: Hatier, 1990), 98.

43. Estienne Cholet, *Remarques singulières de Paris d'après l'exemplaire unique de la Bibliothèque nationale accompagnant le plan de Vassalieu*, Valentin Dufour, ed. (Paris: A. Quantin, 1881), 13-14.

44. Verses 552-564, acte 2, sc. 5, in Pierre Corneille, *Le menteur*, Catherine Casin-Pellegrini, ed. (Paris: Magnard, 2002), 64. Obviously, this passage praises the prime minister of Louis XIII, Cardinal de Richelieu who strongly supported the development of the theatre in Paris.

45. The *hôtel* of la Reine Marguerite is clearly depicted on the *Plan de Merian* (1615).

46. See Maurice Dumolin, *Études de topographie parisienne*, 1 (Paris: 1929), 101-219.

47. *Richelieu: Art and Power*, Hilliard Todd Goldfarb, ed. (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 2002), 353.

48. For an analysis of this theater's reflection of the political power of Richelieu, see Timothy C. Murray, "Richelieu's Theater: The Mirror of a Prince," *Renaissance Drama*, 8 (1977): 275-98.

49. Elena Tamburi, "Guitti, Buonamici, Mariani, les Vigarani: scénographes italiens en voyage à travers l'Europe," in *Les lieux du spectacle dans l'Europe du XVIIᵉ siècle*, Charles Mazouer, ed., Biblio 17 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 2006), 200.

50. See Madeleine Laurain-Portemer, *Études mazarines*, 1 (Paris: De Boccard, 1981).

51. Anne Beijer, "Une maquette de décor récemment retrouvée pour le 'ballet de la Prospérité des armes de France' dansé à Paris, le 7 février 1641. Étude sur la mise en scène au Grand Théâtre du Palais-Cardinal avant l'arrivée de Torelli," in *Le lieu théâtral à la Renaissance*, Jean Jacquot, ed. (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1964), 377-404.

52. Margaret M. McGowan, *L'art du ballet de cour en France, 1581-1643* (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1978).

53. It should be noted that the use of machine theater required hydraulic knowledge.

54. See *Rome-Paris, 1640: transferts culturels et renaissance d'un centre artistique*, Marc Bayard, ed. (Rome: Académie de France à Rome-Villa Médicis~~Paris: Somogy,~~ 2010).

55. See Georges Couton, *Richelieu et le théâtre* (Lyon: Presses universitaires de Lyon, 1986); and *Richelieu, patron des arts*, Jean-Claude Boyer, Bénédicte Gady and Barbara Gaehtgens, eds. (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2009).

56. Hélène Visentin, "Décorateur à la Cour et à la Ville: un artisan de la scène nommé Georges Buffequin (1585?-1641)," *XVIIᵉ Siècle*, 195 (1997): 325-39; Marc Bayard, "Les faiseurs d'artifice: Georges Buffequin et les artistes de l'éphémère à l'époque de Richelieu," *XVIIᵉ Siècle*, 230 (2006): 151-64, and "Richelieu en scène, Buffequin en coulisse," in *Richelieu, patron des arts*, 474-500.

57. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* [1962] (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991); and Alain Viala, *Naissance de l'écrivain* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1985).

58. Pierre Rosenberg replies to a question regarding the ambitious project of the Grand Louvre and if it means the completion of the Louvre: "Rendez-vous au Louvre," *Télérama hors-série*, 82 (1994): 10.