PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE LIMITS OF PLACE

EDWARD WHITTAKER

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ABSTRACT

The study considers how place is historically manifested by the invention of photography. This will be to investigate where photography has developed uses influencing the allocation and administration of places, in particular the early architectural and topographical photography in the history of Paris in the Second and Third Empires of France. The study also examines the affects of the photographic image as an appearance removed from a certainty of the world, yet consisting of an excess of information about the world beyond immediate human perception. Consequently the apparatus of photography is a process of mechanical production and its products assume a power beyond their physical presence. The study will show how photography introduces a modern 'theological' concept into ways of seeing by the light sensitive imprint amounting to a new image of visualisation. The thesis supports the claim that the history of urban space is specifically defined by the subject of photography in its historical context.

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INTRODUCTION

Photography and the Limits of Place

Aims and Objectives:

The period covered by this study is significant in the history of photography, beginning in 1839 with the first recorded images of urban environment and concluding in 1927 with the death of Eugène Atget, the photographer exemplifying the correspondence of photography to place. This is not simply to account for the photographic situation of Paris which Atget was to define, but to ask the question of place as situated *through* photography. Place as a concept during the nineteenth century becomes delimited by photography in relation to the urban consumer.

The position I take throughout the study is hermeneutical and admittedly speculative; the study is not in the strictest sense a history of photography. In many respects the study is sceptical of this history, although in order to write about photography I have inevitably had to spend much time studying its development during the 19th century, visiting many archives. It has proved to be important to not only see, but to touch significant and sometimes very rare photographs. Whilst as objects, the photographs discussed here remain physically insignificant and fragile; they nonetheless enable the present day viewer to encounter certain historical spaces in the form of documents with their own specific purposes as marks of place.

The aim is to interrogate photography as a limit of place, as actual site and situation, which means the 'limit of place' is constantly evolving, even in photographs that are well over 150 years old. Because of their indexicality, these old photographs can be rethought through frames of reference that were not thought about at the time. Indexicality, itself a key term, enters the lexicon as it allies to mechanically produced representations, the very act of reference to the apparatus of the camera. The act of pointing indexically to something is to extend beyond conscious self-reference to refer to *another* reference. B. H. D. Buchloh paraphrasing Walter Benjamin states:

> "There is no doubt that nature as it manifests itself to the camera, is different from nature as it manifests itself to the human eye; different above

all, in that for perceptual space permeated by human consciousness is substituted one which is not." (Buchloh, 1992, p. 9)

It is precisely because of this exteriority to human consciousness, that photography becomes a specific medium. It presents an image of the world, which appears to us as if we know it and yet at the same time is outside of ourselves. Early photography, coinciding with deep level changes in society, eluded adequate critical interpretation until Benjamin's 1931 essay, 'A Short History of Photography' (Benjamin, 1980), from which Buchloh's translation is taken. Benjamin can be credited with unlocking the contingency of photography's pact with historical materialism as a space that runs beneath or outside of perceptual reality. Photography projects the past, presenting an image deferred, or 'negated', in a manner which previous modes of representation could not conceive. Writing of early photographs he states: "The procedure itself caused the models to live not out of the instant but into it […] Schelling's coat; it enters almost unnoticed into immortality". (Benjamin, 1980, p. 205)

Benjamin's work is a departure point for this study as his observations are deferred until the time that Benjamin could contextualise them and locate their past immanence in the present. The study will be less interested in the narrative of the history of photography, but will present photography as a tool of historical analysis extending therefore the spirit of Benjamin's own critique. Rather than 'a history of photography', the background here is to attempt to establish concepts of history situated *by and through* photography.

The thesis suggests that photography defers historical time in the photographic and preserves a dialectic emerging from an incipient point, that limit of place, which photography makes every time it appears in a significant historical role. This appearance is not to reconstitute the photographic subject, but to ground a specific idea that the photographic depiction of place constitutes. I would propose that this is a 'topography of association' now considered to be a photographically determined consciousness of a previously vague history of situation. Photography is to trace time and space via the responsibility of an apparatus. In short, this study avers that there is a history previous of photography's invention and another one that follows it.

This is not to foreground spatial representations traditionally understood as reinforcing certain codes of representation, but on the contrary to suggest that history becomes a photographic construction. This is what photography reports, rather seductively, that it

conforms to reality to the extent that it supplants historical reality itself. As the photographic image acts to fuse space and time and thus to shatter historical linearity, so it also presents, by a representation, or more appositely a reconstruction, a preontological aesthetic conforming to another kind of consciousness which realigns the apparatus of the human gaze. Obviously, in this sense photography's conceptual role in the representation of history has ramifications also for philosophies of representation.

Epistemologies:

Photography intrudes into other discourses spatially. The intersections here are highly complex. Does photography when it begins to be distributed in the mid 19th century change the historical moments it depicts? Manifestly, it is the task of this study not simply to place as a production of space, but to persuade that it does so by introducing a means of representation. This is uniquely the production of a distributive form that can be repeatedly distributed foreclosing any difference between the original and copy. No longer is history devoted to the 'true' account of the *status quo* whose dictatorship has maintained a grip on aesthetics *tout court*, but actually undermines such totalities by reducing events to specific places and times – a shared interest with Realism in 19th century painting. This is the idea that the monument sponsored by the State, whose victory parade early photography at first so assiduously recorded, was to provide an alternative 'memory'. This would be the photograph in which history is rendered.

As far as history is concerned the photograph arrives at the precise moment when the ideas of historicism were most rife in Europe. Following on the heels of idealism, historical theories become histories of the future, of destinies yet to be achieved. One thinks here inevitably of Hegel, in the manner in which history becomes a living substance, a forging of time into an image of the state identified with the absolute idea. On this enfolding of time that pervades subjectivity as a consciousness of freedom, so the material aspects of the world-form become increasingly to do with significations that order respective modes of thought and practice by images. It would be to introduce the desire to see into the specular historical field, which could be taken to presage the invention of photography as the product of a certain romantic idealism. Thus photography in the 19th century is in an important sense more fascinating that any other epoch because it conformed to the so-called spirit of that age.

The question here is how photography helped to construct a world-view by way of spatial extension and temporal suspension that not only conformed to the idealisation of

the emerging nation state, but also revealed the interstices of the counter weight photography provided when the image becomes dependent upon a machine for its visualisation. On this basis Hegel, had he lived but a few years longer, would no doubt have been fascinated by this amazing invention; he may even have averred that in his idea that history also obviates in the self-consciousness of freedom the need for art, that the invention of photography would be evidence that for now a medium can override all representations as a new category of copy forms. Photography then could be seen to negate art by preserving it in a different 'post historical' form.

Methodologies:

One of the issues that inform the methodology is the appropriateness of models. Only a few of the philosophers important to the period covered by this study said much, if anything at all, about photography. Indeed, the study has had to take careful notice of when such thinkers have in different ways referenced either directly the question of photography or indirectly by dint of the photographicity of their language, the effect of the photographic 'metaphor'. This latter has opened the way for thinking of photography via its mimetic displacement and its indexical character. This is because the indexical itself is now introduced in to the lexicon of science, art and the political at roughly the same time, the late 1830s, of the first recorded photographic images. From this point, photography involves a language of 'desire' and it is from here that the concepts of photography originate. (Batchen, 1999)

My methodology has evolved from ideas about space and in particular, the documentation of landscape by photography in minimalist and conceptual art during the 1960s and 70s. The style of these works, often consisting of negations such as impersonal or intrusive surveillance photography, is not so susceptible to the kinds of reasoning pursued in photographic theory dealing with the image community. Such *apriori* 'conceptual' works, made without obvious reference to an author, share traits with historical topographic photography. These photographs became of interest to me in terms of their structure of negation by suggesting parallels between the conceptual art practices of artists like Dan Graham, Robert Smithson and in particular the typologies of Bernd and Hilla Becher with the emergence of architectural photography as it occurred in the 19th century. This is a silent partner in this study; I have chosen not to write about these artists, but instead about the photographic works that set the scene for them: forerunners such as Éduard Baldus and Eugène Atget.

A key text in the genesis of this study as an avatar of its ambitions is Michel Foucault's essay on Velasquez' painting, *Las Meninas* that appeared as the first chapter in his book, *The Order of Things; an Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. (Foucault, 2003) Foucault describes how second order representation, i.e. the representation of representation actually works and furthermore, how the arrival of this rationalism is to announce, not the arrival of an autonomous human individual, but that of a non–subject *called* 'Man' as both subject and object, an "empirico-transcendental doublet" determined by a disciplinary gaze as mirroring the architectural void. (Foucault, 2003, p. 347) Briefly, the painting is distinguished by its setting out of the gaze as the foreground space is reversed, the erstwhile subjects of the painting are vacated and instead the painting shows what would remain 'unseen' in a conventional picture; the chamber space of the studio, the painter at work, onlookers arriving to view the progress of the painting. The images ostensibly the subjects of the work, the King and Queen of Spain are displaced (one is tempted here to say 'photographed') onto a tiny mirror on the back wall of the chamber and the viewer thus invited to take their place to enter into the whole visual field of the work.

Nonetheless, despite the absence of the King and Queen their dominion remains intact. The whole of the court is organised as much to their absence as it is to their actual presence; instead the painting acts as an enormous mirror organising the whole architectonic of representations the power of which is the true subject of Velasquez' painting. The affect intended in Foucault's reading of the painting is that the sovereign holds efficacy over the depiction, the production of representation, not by presence, but precisely by absence. Immediately this is the arrival at a state of things, which is to imply that power and the image are synonymous with a construction of the gaze outside of the immediate field. This is the underlying brilliance of Foucault's analysis; the whole of aesthetics is determined by representations of power, no matter what the containment of gazes can mean for the observer. The management of power itself adumbrates all visual manifestations, when, in essence they become pure representations employing a level of observation and observance, which are already materially historical *apriori* representations.

> "Perhaps there exists, in this painting by Velasquez, the representation as it
> were, of Classical representation, and the definition of the space it opens up
> to us. And indeed, representation undertakes to represent itself here in all its
> elements, with its images, the eyes to which it is offered, the faces it makes

visible, the gestures that call it into being. But there in the midst of this dispersion which is simultaneously grouping together and spreading out before us, indicated compellingly from every side, is an essential void: the necessary disappearance of that which is its foundation –of the person it resembles and the person in whose eyes it is only a resemblance. This very subject – which is the same – has been elided. And representation, freed finally from the relation that was impeding it, can offer itself as representation in its pure form." (Foucault, 2003, p. 17)

In this light the photographic copy is tied to the emergence of a surface of power, of Man as defined by representation, a *dispositif* unencumbered by the task of origination and myth and instead now involved in the immanence of the reality of orders as already a representation.

This clearly opens out to allow for photography to be thought through paradigms that subvert the tendency of photography to be pictorially aesthetic. The question is to locate something in photography, which resists this assimilation the characteristics of which I will try and extrapolate as the inverse of representation and more a construction of a frame of reference. I see this as caused by the pervasiveness of photography to the categorisation of photography's mimesis by the redundancy of the original as a radically different form of mimesis unthought of in the same frame of reference as painting. In this sense, *Las Meninas* is a work of photographic efficacy that occurred 150 years before photography became possible. This is not to say Velasquez painting anticipates photography, but the realisation of the empty place of the gaze occupying the pivotal point, the very seat of power later mapped by Foucault on to the Panopticon as a model of transcendental surveillance.

This is not to gainsay the argument about what photography is, for example whether it is art or not, and nor the question of photography's ontological reality. Photography is not a physically complete medium, but a thin, usually paper, substrate; it is not a physical surface in the sense of a painting. However, I am trying to write about photographs from beyond the aesthetic and thus do not accord any specific aesthetic theory to the subjects of photography. The aim is to review history through the presence of an indexical value which is to return again to the analogue, the tiny particle that allows the substrate to be sensitised for the camera image.

My position is to see the aesthetic of photography as of limited theoretical importance. Therefore this study makes clear that photography does not *require* an ontological status. Photography itself short-circuits the argument because of the fact that it can

subsume itself to whatever it is used for. For example, in relation to painting: by being able to photograph a painting, Foucault's discussion of *Las Meninas* was written in front of a photograph, not the painting itself. The painting can be investigated by a critique that is not always possible in the full apprehension of the work's physical presence. Thus the photograph performs the task of reduction, permitting a different kind of penetrative analytic of its substance.

Is a photograph of a work of art then not a work of art? That is to imply that a photograph is not a work of art in the proper sense because it is merely a medium of analogue recording. This is not, as the analogue would have it, because the painting thus photographed is essentially reduced to a unified substrate, but it would seem that even to discuss photography as art is therefore rather fruitless. This is not to preclude that the analogue is somehow 'aesthetically' suspended and the photograph can be viewed as relating to a painting by comparison.

This relation by analogy is rich and indeed historic; arguably the very core of the *Las Meninas*. It is only at the point of the emergence of this extraordinary painting in Foucault's analysis as an apparatus of power, that a representation is caught in the act of representing and becomes a frame of analysis rather than an aesthetic contemplation. A new epistemological image is detected that diverts both the aesthetic and immanent capability of both photograph and painting into another vector of seeing. The photographs of *Las Meninas* are in some way more intimately connected to its true purpose than the actual painting in the Madrid Prado.

Summary of Chapters:

The study pays particular attention to photography in mid 19th and early 20th century of France, as the crucible in which the redefinition of place by photography is given, not only its ideological importance. The argument will be to suggest that photography and the modern idea of place share in an original event and are then coincidental with each other. It follows that the history of place and the history of photography emerge from a certain configuration and interdependence of history and space that occurs specifically during the period studied.

The first chapter entitled, 'Haussmann and the Photographic Monument of the Second Republic', refers to Baron Georges Haussmann (1809–1891) whose rebuilding of Paris as an aesthetic of destruction/reconstruction had inherent links to the emergence of highly detailed architectural photographs. These photographs it is argued were not given

any aesthetic value as they were used instrumentally to gauge and adjudge the progress and meaning of the reforms to the city ordered by the Emperor Napoleon III and carried out by Haussmann, to reshape the city into his image of Empire. This is analysed by reference to two photographs by the Prussian photographer, Éduard Baldus (1813–1889) of the historic monument of the Tour de St. Jacques, one before Haussmannisation the other after. The tying in of the logic of Haussmann's creative destruction with the eventual reconstitution of the Napoleonic monument as being 'of' photography as the success of the project well illustrated the modus operandi of Haussmann's restorers, builders and photographers. Although not a direct employee of Haussmann's, Éduard Baldus was called upon to make these images because the tower was considered a valuable ancient monument. Haussmann's ministry arrived at an accommodation with the Commission for Historic Monuments on the basis that they would both be satisfied by Baldus' assiduous work. There is no question that if there were a position of the 'architectural photographer to the court of Napoleon III' it would have been Baldus' domain as he was considered the leading monumental photographer of the Second Republic and whose career, with the possible exception of Charles Marville (1813–1879) is identified with its rise and fall.

In some ways this first chapter is best read as a prologue to the second chapter, 'Barricade Typology' which charts the unravelling of architectural photography in the fall of the Second Empire and the ruins of the Commune in 1871. The premise here is that the appearance of the barricade can be considered as an architectural intervention into the Imperial model of spatial administration carried out under Haussmann. There is no monument to the Commune, if one excludes the rather obscure Mur des Fédérés in Pere Lachaise and, in the true spirit of the Commune, recognises the tourist attraction of the Sacre Coeur as a symbol to a somewhat specious idea of national unity. The premise is that the many barricade photographs made during the uprising do constitute a photographic memorial but by allegory. This is an ironic comment on Haussmann whose work is defiled, but it is also to take these photographs as serious documents of architectural history and subject them to an appropriate methodological analysis. It has to be admitted that without the dialectic of Walter Benjamin this thought would not have occurred and Benjamin's presence is felt throughout the chapter as his work permits the rethinking of the Commune as a state of emergency as well as a decisive moment in the modern politics of representation. The chapter contains writing on two photographers associated in contrasting ways with the Commune, Auguste–Bruno

Braquehais (1823–1875) and Hippolyte Blancard (1843–1924) whose work has recently been reprinted by archivist, Jean Barronet. (Baronnet, 2006)

The photographer, who dominates the remainder of the study and where many of the themes outlined in the first two chapters are revisited, is Eugène Atget (1857–1927). Atget was the obscure hero of early twentieth century French photography, who almost single-handedly saved documentary photography from misappropriation by aesthetic conservatism during the Third Republic. His work constitutes the definitive archive of early 20th century Paris. However, it is to some of the lesser known collections that this study proceeds, first the squalid camps of the Zoniers which Atget edited into an album consisting of sixty photographs and amounting to a remarkable and sustained exploration of the suburban zone extending to another album of photographs devoted to the ring of Fortifications surrounding Paris. These two highly specific bodies of work by the photographer have not yet received any sustained critical engagement and appraisal despite the wealth of writing on Atget.

The third chapter entitled, 'Atget and the Topology of Resistance and Poverty (Zoniers)' discusses the double meaning of the document as both legal deposition and form of spatial representation given by Atget's documental approach in recording the confinement to a zone of exclusion of the Chiffonier or rag picking community of Paris. The chapter will explore the images of the camps in their marginal socio-economic reality as the production of space in the terms of Henri Lefebvre. The topology of the ground space represented by Atget's editing of the album, which discerns a space between the topography as a horizon bounded by a zone of exclusion and the area of topology circumvented by Atget's movements around the camps effectively adds a complexity of analysis to the spaces of habituation here referencing habitus and heterotopia, as theorised by both Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991) and Michel Foucault (Foucault, 1986) as two critical themes of the historical community of those barred from citizenship by the authorities.

This is followed by chapter four that assays the metaphor of the labyrinth as a *vignette* of historical photography. 'Atget and the Cliché of History (Fortifications)' considers Atget's lonely wandering in the Paris Fortifications as operating to uncover the resonance of the wall and the twisted trees of the undergrowth as encompassing metaphors of the Commune (reflecting Atget's own political stance) also tied to pastoral representations of historical French Art. In the bleak spaces of the Paris defences, the chapter argues, the dusty bulwarks and overgrown earthworks become for Atget a

complex site of memory and recurrence, but in the sense that can only be deposited in the form of the cliché, the pattern book of popular images that Atget had intended each of his albums to be if they were to be published and put on sale for mass audience. The key comment here is the commodity of Atget's work, which I will argue is to strip back the commodity to its analogue of production as thought by Karl Marx, for whom the commodity fulfils the same function. This will bring the text, by reference to the commodity of images, full circle to accommodate a critical overview of the fundamental text on Atget of central importance here, Molly Nesbit's, *Atget's Seven Albums*. (Nesbit, 1992)

'Atget at Bercy' is the fifth and final chapter and it takes a detailed look at a discreet series of photographs made by the photographer during his wanderings along the old suburban boulevards of eastern Paris and discusses their importance. The chapter argues that this series of five photographs with a subset providing an additional nine images, deals with a revelation of negation of the urban topography. This to suggest that whilst Atget did not have the means with which to conceptualise his works he had an unerring intuition of the ability of photography to deploy itself as the projecting condition of a territory, by default, in the absolute concentration on the configuration of an object which appears to obscure the true purpose of the image. Atget's work here is marked by an engagement with telegraphy whose invention is directly correlative to photography and makes use of a similar analogue technology. Instead of the shadow of photography it is the echo of telegraphy and Atget produces a phenomenological photography, to electrify a condition of force eventually to be borne out by the unwelcome (to Atget) interest of the Surrealists.

Atget's work is read through here from a paradigm of phenomenological intention and reduction opening out to hidden correlates of eschatological reason, which rise up in one of the images in particular, an astonishing and unique image dominated by two brutal telegraph poles blocking the view over the rail yards seen from the viaduct of Boulevard Poniatowski. The research here takes into account a phenomenological topology in terms of the concentration Atget applies to the object as an *eidos* of a world dominated by technological networks. The chapter also makes use of extensive on site research to retrace the fascination of the images Atget made that day.

CHAPTER 1

The Photographic Monument of the Second Republic

Prologue:

The inauguration of the Second Republic of France was an event declared in the febrile atmosphere of anger and resentment when, after the Revolution of 1848, the forces of reaction had regrouped to rob the Social Republic of its revolution and replace it with a neoconservative Bonapartist regime instead. It was a return to the past in the promise of the future offered, somewhat speciously, by an alliance of militarists, former Royalists and fellow travellers gathered around the new Emperor who basked in the historic glow of his uncle, Napoleon I.

Bonaparte proved himself to be a formidable politician; he outmanoeuvred his enemies with declarations that would present his opponents with impossible choices; he wagered against the Republic by the institution of emergencies that culminated in the attempt by his detractors to impeach the President (the office to which Bonaparte was elected in 1849) over the interference in the affairs of Italy when he unilaterally dispatched an army to restore the authority of the Pope. Finally on June 23rd 1849, in the notorious vote for the Patrimony in the Chamber of Deputies, the war in Italy was ratified and the opposition, the 'Montagne' was routed.

The way was now open on the back of the military triumphs in Italy and jingoistic hubris at home, for the incumbent Louis Napoleon Bonaparte to push forward plans for totalitarian control of the Republic, which he duly did in the form of a Coup d'État on 3rd December 1851. Thus began the Second Empire of France.

Briefly, this is the backdrop to the historical context of this chapter; the arrival of the Second Republic and the rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte newly crowned Emperor Napoleon III. Then the policies: financial deregulation, the rebuilding of Paris, and ultimately, war and insurrection. This chapter intends to examine how the Republic's architectural legacy would be dependent on the planner and urban bureaucrat Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809–1891), employed by the Emperor to configure Paris for its new role as the Imperial capital.

Introduction:

The 1850s were a period of great upheaval and technological progress in France: the rail network increased threefold which facilitated, in turn, the movement of goods, commodities and people; the machinery for large-scale industrial production was becoming an ever closer possibility. In the meantime, photography had discovered a legion of uses and applications and had been aided by technological developments in chemistry and paper production that now lent it a much more powerful distributive presence than with the old Daguerreotype method of the 1830s and 40s. Daguerreotypes continued to be made, but the new paper photography was striding forward as a technology both in terms of its ability to print images in editions and also in the modes of production as the paper negative – soon to be followed by the wet plate collodion method – had permitted much larger and better cameras. Now photography was on the cusp of its maturity and some of the images of this period remain among the greatest examples of the medium to this day. Along with the maturity of the process, now able to produce extremely detailed views, and with more reliable printing processes came commercial development, which importantly coincided with the arrival of the new Republic, which although conservative was to fully embrace modernity.

Paris was always the hub; it was where the process of photography as a practical instrument had been announced by the scientist, Francois Arago's speech to the Deputies in the summer of 1839.* It would seem that this recognition alone was enough to ensure a place for photography in the 'image market' that had flourished in the city from 1789. Moreover, photography being perceived along the lines of a natural science, appealed to scientific positivism exemplified in the figure of philosopher Auguste Comte (1798–1857). Positivism propounded the study of humanity by scientific methods. It represented a fundamental movement toward the rational understanding of nature by empirical study as the basis of "mans action on nature" and thus would be interested in the empirical as offered by photographic recording, "…since the knowledge of the laws of phenomena […] can alone conduct us in the active life." (Sobieszek, 1975, p. 162)

Against this background of scientific positivism, photography was seen as providing *prima facie* evidence of the world's existence as presented by its appearance, the

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*François–Dominique Arago (1786–1853) mathematician and politician, President of the Republic May–June 1849.

implication being that man's representation of nature and the nature represented are taken as part of the same rational whole. Photography seemed, at first, to confirm something very close to the spirit of the positivist view, that of the unity of nature and history – that history has a natural structure and that its truth could be served by objective observation. Arago himself, the scientist politician who announced the invention was himself part of the positivist movement and to announce such an invention in the Chamber already implied that photography – or more accurately Daguerreotypy – was to be taken seriously and seen not just a plaything for the landed gentry. In this way photography at its point of departure attains a political role in French history.

Photography and the Image of the Emperor:

Shortly after the successful inauguration of the Daguerreotype, the government decided to apply laws on printed material to photographs. Daguerrotypy, and later photography, was already instituted by the time that Napoleon was elevated to Emperor. To become a photographer (or one that could bid for ministerial contracts) required that the business be registered with the Depôt Legal. Furthermore photography was then subject to the first ordinance made under the post revolutionary 1849 government to restrict press freedom by making it illegal for any newspaper article or pamphlet to be displayed or published without the name of the author. None of this appeared to restrict the growth of the photographic industry – indeed it may have aided it – to the extent that photography firms in Paris alone numbered around 3,000 by 1870. (McCauley, 1994 p. 315) Photography quickly became a shining example of Napoleonic enterprise. Photography had become involved in the politics of the Empire firstly by the official perusal of the photographs at the Depôt Legal, which acted as a guarantor of probity, and secondly by the use that the State could make of the photographic pictures submitted, notwithstanding the revenues it raised in business taxes.

Napoleon Bonaparte, though neither a photographer nor having ever publicly announced an interest in the medium, was perhaps the first politician to make extensive use of his photographed image. It is safe to assume, however, that as a student of architecture, he would almost by default have had more than a passing interest in the medium. For example, he was known to stop unannounced if the mood took him to have a portrait made at a photographic studio happy to receive a Royal visit. Disdéri's success, for instance, was almost entirely based on such portraits. The Imperial family

also posed for shots made in the studios of Mayer and Pierson and the family portrait was important for the Napoleonic identification of the State. (McCauley, 1994 p. 301) Whereas the public only saw previous Emperors as a distant, even aloof presence, Napoleon became a familiar, even intimate countenance through his photographic portrait (Fig. 1.1) being displayed and copied. He would soon come to identify himself and perhaps also others with their photographic images and also be able to use his 'image' to further his Imperial interests. *

Fig. 1.1. Meyer and Pierson: *Emperor Napoleon III in 1860.*

Added to this was also the burgeoning movement, also linked to historicist positivism, towards architectural conservation led by the architectural historian, Eugène–Emmanuel

*Andre–Adolphe–Eugène Disdéri (1819–1889) was the most successful commercial photographer of the Second Republic. His firm produced thousands of popular *carte-de-visite* images modelled on those he had made for the Emperor and his family.

Viollet–le–Duc (1814–1879), and the Commission of Historique Monuments under the stewardship of Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870). If the photographer was skilled enough they could make lucrative contracts via the Commission. These works requiring photographic documentation, which began with the attempt to document the Gothic heritage in the whole of France, the Missiones Héliographiques of 1850, (Daniel, 1994, p. 22) would eventually – in Paris at any rate – extend to the documentation of large renovation projects emanating from the Emperor's office.

The focus of this chapter is on one relatively small aspect of such renovation conducted under the auspices of Mérimée (and most probably the Emperor himself) of the medieval Tour de St. Jacques. The reason for this renovation was that the tower was considered to be an important embellishment of the Rue de Rivoli that served as a historical monument and as a sightline for the axis of north south, east west crossing between Boulevard Sebastopol and Rue Rivoli. This area had often been earmarked as the crux of any plan to reform and modernise Paris: it was also an area notorious for slum dwellings and political insurrection.

On the assumption of the throne, Napoleon began almost immediately to embark on the work, which he happily had inherited from previous plans stretching back to the work of Rambuteau under his uncle. Napoleon III was, above all, determined to honour his heritage by completing his uncle's work and with it the *image* of Empire that was to turn Paris into an Imperial capital to rival ancient Rome.

Haussmann:

Georges-Eugène Haussmann, the erstwhile Prefect of Bordeaux, had been called to Paris on the personal initiative of his friend and ally, now Emperor, Napoleon III, who entrusted him with overseeing the massive project to complete the rebuilding of the city. According to Giedion (Giedion, 1946) the appointment of Haussmann inaugurated a new kind of urban plan, one dominated by the street – "the cannon-shot boulevard, seemingly without end" – and radically different in scale to the discreet garden squares of London. Summoned to Napoleon's private study at St. Cloud, Haussmann was briefed on plans to be based upon Napoleon's own drawings:

> A large map of Paris hung on the wall of the study. With his own hand –'his own august hand,' Haussmann prefers to say – he (Napoleon) plotted on it the alterations he intended to make in the city. These proposed alterations were marked out in red, blue and green, in descending order of urgency. For

the most part those sketched in green were never executed." (Giedion, 1946, p. 465)

The Tour de St. Jacques stood in the very centre of the area outlined in red for the most urgent consideration, as a key pivot of the first stage (*réseau*) to complete the eastern extension of the Rue de Rivoli. The tower's position powerfully suggested its site as satisfying the need to disguise or, at least visually, resolve one of the most contentious issues inherited from previous planners; the fact that the Boulevard Sebastopol did not cross the Ile de la Cité in a straight line, but kinked some thirty meters to the west from the Pont au Change to the Boulevard St. Michel on the left bank. This misaligned axis proved to be one of the most taxing of the challenges Haussmann and his architects faced, as the intersection of Le Châtelet along with its proximity to the Hotel de Ville, was not only the administrative hub of Paris, but also a space frequently affected by barricading and riot.

The *réseau* adapted from Napoleon's designs attempted to deal with a number of problems in reshaping and securing the intersection. The area as a whole lacked a decisive focal point, and, immediately to the east in close proximity to Haussmann's own offices in the Hôtel de Ville, the Tour de St. Jacques stood surrounded by slum properties. The crossing at le Châtelet and its surrounding area was fundamental to the Emperor's desire to see the city expressed in such a way that would both ensure and sustain the architectural image of the French Empire and – crucially – create a safe area around the town hall. The solution was to reshape the whole area around the dilapidated old tower, which itself was to be renovated using the most advanced building technology available.

The new tower would refocus the gaze to a spectacular monument by subtle shifts in perspective offered by the restorations and their illusions of scale. Furthermore the tower would represent a certain historical inevitability at the very core of the city's political space. The old medieval tower was to be replaced by another tower that would be the expression of, not only a technical prowess in reconstruction, but also the historical allegory of the French nation. The new symbol of the Tour de St. Jacques would be to insist that the logic of the Second Empire be based upon the Napoleonic hegemony as the natural defender of the heritage, *le patrimonie*. The new tower would be designed in such a way that it provided a nodal point around which a whole number of impressive perspectives could be organised. The Tour de St. Jacques, then, was to be

a project of the highest possible calibre as it was both the historical and monumental focus underpinning the straight-line boulevard and the open vista as the spatial expression of the political logic of the Empire State.

These plans, which had been in train for six decades under various previous Prefects, were given to Haussmann directly by the Emperor as much for his recognised skill as an administrator as his ability in town planning or architecture. Not only that, but Haussmann was a shrewd politician and close confidant of Bonaparte from the latter's days of exile before 1848.

Haussmann, soon after his appointment became the second most powerful man in France. The Emperor had entrusted him with such an epic task for another and perhaps overriding reason, was that Haussmann understood how to use the stock market and operate the financial instruments necessary to raise the vast amount of money required for the proposed work. This was not just to carry out the works themselves, but also to purchase properties that had to be demolished in order to facilitate the extent of the boulevard building. Haussmann's skill was to realise that the bourgeoisie would support his work only insofar they were provided by generous disbursements for the appropriation of their properties.

The practical issues apart, carrying out the work (which did not include the rebuilding of the Louvre – the Emperor's own project) was intended to secure the city of Paris from insurrection. This was considered to be much more pressing than protecting the city from invasion. Above all this meant, once more, pushing forward reforms to the street layout, which had already been underway under previous Prefects. It was not Haussmann who had decided upon the replacement of narrow streets with very wide boulevards to prevent barricade building, and similarly, cobblestones with tarmacadam to prevent their use as projectiles. All this had been planned under the philanthropic Rambuteau in the era of Napoleon I and had steadily worked its way into the policies of the July Monarchy of the 1840's under Haussmann's predecessors, Jacques Hittorf and Jean–Jacques Berger. Thus it could be said that the problem was one of spacing, creating distances by deep lying vanishing points more related to the theory of ballistics, rather than the revisualisation of history.

Architecture:

Siegfried Giedion points out that for Haussmann the prime concern was the creation of the boulevard. The Prefect spent "nearly one and half billion francs on street

construction and on the demolition program". (Giedion, 1946, p. 147) Therefore, the true goal of Haussmann was the laying out of a totality. He had little interest in the invention of new institutions, but the new space to be achieved, in its scale and distance, was intended to support and link up to existing ones and their monuments. These were to become nodal points of the scheme and allow for spectacular views as well as enable orientation. Also as Giedion asserts, it is instructive that the period in question, post 1848, was despite the upheavals of Haussmann's work, architecturally conservative. This did not mean that there was no new building; it is simply meant that this new building did not suggest new architectural forms as exemplifying the State. It tended toward a certain kind of historical blandness. "It is easy to forget," Giedion asserts, that "during these seventeen years (of Haussmann's work) Paris was sprinkled with buildings of the most various types: great exhibition halls, churches, schools, markets, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and so on." (Giedion, 1946, p. 496) The overarching plan was to open out space, which when viewed became a strategic spectacle under military requirements understood by the bourgeoisie in the need for security.

The rationale was to equip space with the necessary attribute for its administration, "to disencumber the large buildings, palaces, and barracks in such a way as to make them more pleasing to the eye, afford easier access on days of celebration, and a simplified defense on days of riot." (Giedion, 1946, p. 471) After 1848, alongside the new Ferro–concrete technologies, cladding a surface to an iron structure began to be employed by architects for the establishment of a discreetly unified appearance in the apartment block. Again Haussmann balanced the need for security with an idea of a visual unity, of the logic of Cartesian space now unravelled in the model of hub and radius to encompass the city by an "impulse to rationality." (Frampton, 2004, p. 23) The architecture of Haussmann, then, was not in the spectacular iron constructed markets and stations, but in the neo-classical façades of the typical bourgeois apartments. These were to provide the neutral street frontage, which would frame the boulevard architecture of which Giedion thoroughly approved:

> "Haussmann showed his sagacity in refusing to allow any tricks to be played with façades. Simply and without discussion, he spread a uniform façade over the whole of Paris. It featured high French windows, with accents provided by lines of cast iron balconies like those used on the Rue de Rivoli under Napoleon I. He employed, unobtrusively, Renaissance shapes of a pleasantly neutral nature. A last touch of the unity, which marked Baroque architecture, can still be felt. The neutral façades and the

general uniformity make Haussmann's enormous work of rebuilding better than any other executed in or after the fifties of the nineteenth century." (Giedion, 1946, p. 495)

The façades' strategic alignment to the street was not to an avowedly noticeable kind of architecture, but to the encouragement and facilitation of movement and passage. In so doing, these neutral and often extremely long alleys introduce a new experience. The boulevard altered a ratio of time to space now equipped for marching and parading rather than strolling. Taking in the extent of the boulevard by the experience of walking alone became more or less impossible and the *grandes boulevards* with the monument at its hub now favouring the businessman in his carriage. This novel alienation of the boulevard resisted absorption by traditional experience. Instead the boulevard accomplished the feat of situating the citizen under a system of surveillance. Haussmann integrated the efficacy of the monumental into the plan as the embellishment of street *carrefours*. In this plan, the older structures required renovation and Haussmann was more interested in the monument for *where* it stood rather than *why* it stood there. He would pay little attention to the truth of the monument's actual historical origin, but much more to its historical/aesthetic effect, and to how it might serve to enhance and contain the experience of the city as a totality.

Photography and Architectural Historicism:

Haussmann's skill, apart from the sheer ambition of his plans for a totalitarian Empire State evinced by a street pattern, was in political and financial manoeuvres. In the restoration of old buildings this meant working in cooperation with the Historic Monuments Commission representing the architectural legacy. The main personalities here, Eugène–Emmanuel Viollet–le–Duc, Antoine Vaudoyer and Jean–Baptiste Lassus *et al*, gathered under the offices of Mérimée and determined to protect, renovate and virtually rebuild Romanesque, neo-classical, Gothic monuments and buildings – were highly suspicious of Haussmann's motives – as indeed they were equally sceptical about the dangers of a Napoleonic dictatorship. Notwithstanding this, these men were historicist in the sense that they sought not just to preserve the Gothic legacy of France, but moreover, to announce the *future* of the architectural patrimony.

Men such as Viollet-le-Duc were influential with the Emperor even as they distrusted him. Haussmann, being a cautious politician, would no doubt have taken advice as regards the monuments deemed to be the most important and suitable for renovation. It

could have been during this consultative period (soon after Haussmann's appointment in 1853) that a committee would have been convened and made up – possibly even with the Emperor himself presiding – from experts like Mérimée, the architect, Ballu (France's leading 'Gothic' architect) and representatives of the Ministry of the Interior and of course the Prefect, Haussmann. There they would have presented to Haussmann an image in the form of a large photograph. It showed a derelict Tour de St Jacques standing, blackened with soot, in the centre of a square of eviscerated buildings, an image of catastrophe even apocalypse. The photograph was labeled, *Tour de St Jacques*, and the photographer, Édouard Baldus (Fig. 1.2).

The Photograph of the Tour de St. Jacques as Ruin:
Although there are no records of such meeting having taken place and if there were they would no doubt have been lost in the conflagrations of Hôtel de Ville 1871, but it is safe to assume at the 'meeting' the decision would have been reinforced by Baldus' photograph to push ahead at full speed to renovate the Tour de St. Jacques to its former Gothic glory. In fact, the finance for this was not at issue as it had already been included in the bill ensuring the *prolongement* for the Rue de Rivoli, which was passed into law in 1849. At the fictional meeting Haussmann would have already been fully briefed on the urgency of these works. The area around the tower was socially and politically unstable and therefore traditionally a site for barricades, which had been erected there during the previous year's disturbances.

The Tour de St. Jacques was all that remained of the church of St. Jacques built between 1509 and 1523 and at one time considered to be a fine example of the late Gothic. It stood in a strategically central square between the Place du Châtelet and the Hotel de Ville. The tower was high at nearly 40 meters. The opinion that the monument was of national historical merit had been in circulation at least since 1836, when it was purchased by the city. It eventually became part of the programme to resurrect the architectural heritage. History up to that point had bestowed a somewhat chequered career on the monument. In 1793, for example, the nave of the church was dismantled and sold off leaving only the tower intact. The tower, itself, was thereafter in use as a munitions factory, supplying musket shot. A crucible was built at the top from which molten lead was released in small quantities to drop down inside the tower. When the globule of lead splashed into a bath of water at the base, it would have formed a perfect ball.

Fig. 1.2. Édouard Baldus: *Tour de St Jacques, Paris,* 1852. Salted paper print from a paper negative, 43.5 x 34.5 cm.

The Tour de St. Jacques had been waiting for its confirmation as an official monument since the time of its acquisition by the city. In the meantime, and although it has not been possible to confirm, it ceased to be used for musket shot and to have lapsed into a state of some decay. It is also safe to assume that, owing to the height of the structure the top of the tower offered a good observation point and possibly this was still in use. The history of the Tour de St. Jacques would be to note that its function changed from after the demolition of the nave to assume the role of a watchtower/fortress/munitions factory, quite a catalogue of changing functions although 'commemorative monument' or 'architectural masterpiece' were not amongst them. Thus the tower, under the new

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plans for Rivoli was destined to become not only a beacon for the Second Empire's credentials for architectural patrimony, but an ancient symbol at the very centre of Haussmann's axis.

By the time that Baldus begins the process of setting up his camera, the structure is starkly exposed in the midst of some equally derelict apartment blocks, which had probably not been occupied since the 1848 revolution. Haussmann's predecessor, Jean–Jacques Berger, had already begun some site clearance, most likely in 1850, when work on the Rivoli extension was resumed and it was at this point that the Tour de St Jacques was finally adopted to the grand plan and earmarked for restoration.

From 1852 the Ministry of the Interior, the powerful and sometimes shadowy agency of the new regime, had employed Baldus in the capacity of his self-directed project to photograph monumental structures all over France. His commission to fund this project was met in full by the Ministry and it has to be assumed that the provenance of the first photograph of the tower would have also been planned as part of this initiative. Baldus' own project had developed out of his employment on the Missiones Héliographiques of 1849-51, the first attempt, organised by the Historic Monuments Commission, to photographically catalogue the architectural heritage. There are distinct similarities in approach when Baldus was asked to photograph the Tour de St. Jacques for the first time in the summer of 1852 (or 1853) to the methods he had adopted on these first commissions. For example, in the photograph (Fig.1.3) of the arch at Orange and made just prior as the first Tour de St. Jacques photograph; the viewpoint here is on the level of the arch's footings and creates a place for the viewer to navigate the space in and around the building to obtain a sure grasp of its three-dimensionality. Baldus is very careful to aim the camera at the characteristics of the building of most use to the architect and historian. Malcolm Daniel describes the photograph thus:

> "With three quarter view and subtle lighting conditions, he (Baldus) gave the arch greater sculptural presence more clearly describing the three apertures, showing the coffered underside of the vaults, and registering the details of fluted Corinthian columns and bas relief trophies with subtle and exquisite legibility." (Daniel, 1994, p. 31)

The building's sculptural mass is also suggested by the context of the wide format. The pile of stones being used in renovation proves adept at ironically reflecting on the condition of semi-ruination. Malcolm Daniel goes on to note that the top part of the telegraph pole in the left of the building has been painted out to stop it interfering with

Fig. 1.3 Édouard Baldus: *Roman Arch, Orange,* 1853. Salted paper print from a paper negative, 32.4 x 44.2 cm.

the profile of the building, although Baldus was unable to remove the wires that cross in front of the monument. Again there is the trade-off between the surface of the image screen and affect of the building *en masse*, the tension between the planar substrate of the paper with the colossal density of the image. The unity of the imprint recalls the etchings of Piranesi (Fig. 1.4). The fact that in 1846, new editions of Piranesi's *Veduta* were published by Parisian print workshops would certainly have offered the strong possibility that Baldus may have decided upon an approach after seeing them. Kathryn Horste, in her study of the photography of medieval architecture in France, underscores this point. She also draws a specific parallel between Piranesi's *Veduta di Roma,* the series of etchings that provide the nodal points for Piranesi's master plan, the Campio di Marzio, and the early photography of monuments conceived in the similar context of a 'plan' aimed at identifying the historical with the monumental:

> "Baldus recorded the structure's volumetric massiveness and over built character of Roman Imperial architecture. As an image it calls to mind the qualities of precise details subsumed within the grandiose vision of Piranesi's Veduta, di Roma" (Horste, 2003, p. 282).

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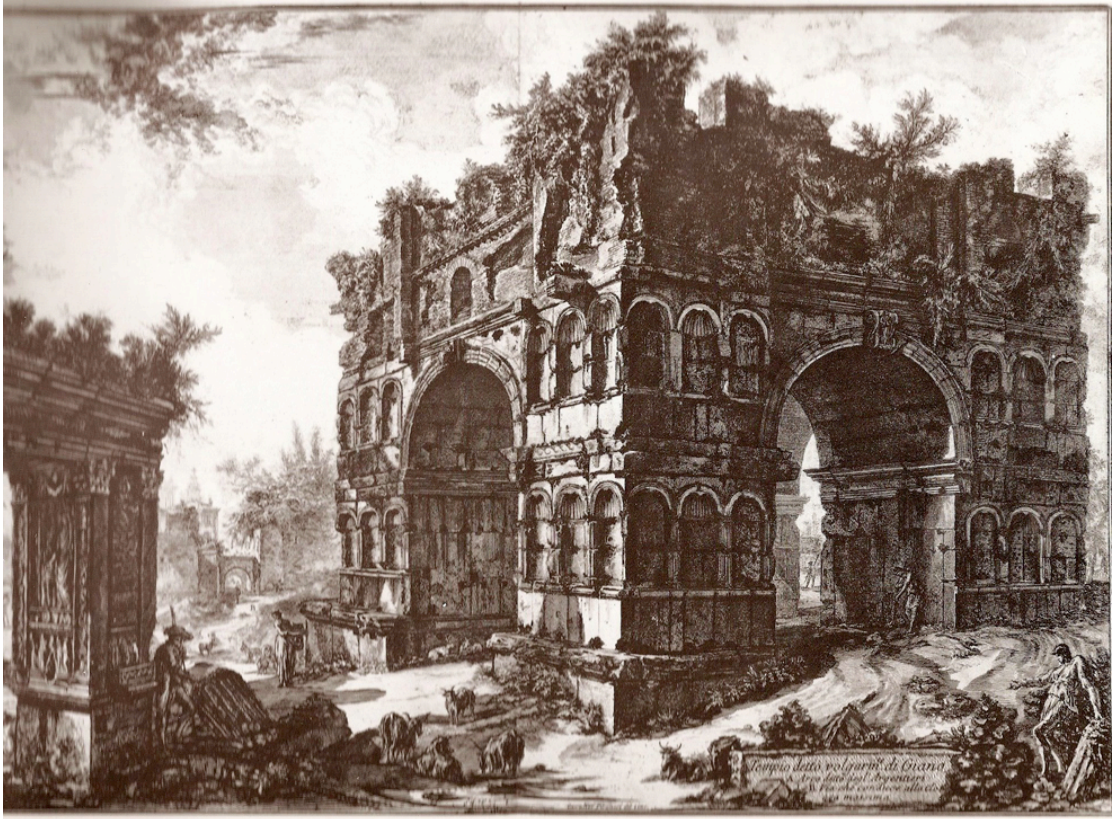
Fig. 1.4. Giovanni Batista Piranesi: *Ruined Arch*, c. 1764. Etching.

Perhaps more than the rather obvious similarity of the Piranesi *Ruined Arch* to the *Arch at Orange* by Baldus is clearly the first image of the tower, which has the appositely dark and metaphoric content of many of the best of Piranesi's work including the 'Carceri', the series of etchings of torture chambers and prisons. To think Baldus' photography in the same breath as Piranesi opens out the metaphor of the *impression* to suggest complex overlays of erasure and trace. Furthermore the substrate, the glass or paper plate sensitised to light before insertion in the camera, can also be considered in the interleaving of the membrane that similarly cushions the etching plate in the printing process used by Piranesi. Thus both modes of image production are dependent upon a physically receptive surface substrate (arguably the analogue in its technical form begins with the etching plate which is not the finished object but the substrate from which the finished item is made). This is the key to Horste's insight, for by taking account of the analogous surface of both Baldus and Piranesi by epic monumentality as having some kind of resonance, a whole series of concatenations arise to do with the surface, rather than any kind of pictorialism. What is apparent is that Baldus works from a premise that the camera apparatus itself is a 'reading' rather than picture machine; it

registers light waves on the plate and by a physical process of materialisation the light must impress itself into the plate. The substance of this process is the analogue and in the very early photography this achieves its pinnacle of perfection as to constitute the surface matrix to an infinite number of analogues. Patrick Maynard explains this as photography's quest to affinity with natural analogues in the stains of rocks, the grain of wood, the marks and traces of nature (Maynard, 1997) to which I would add the shadow and the echo. Maynard's reading here is interesting but it could be to confuse the indexicality of marks with the analogue that measures them; better is his description of the sensitive plate:

> "Based upon the fact that our acute powers of extracting information from fine visual differences on surfaces, extremely slight and fragile states of surfaces produced by tiny physical energies […] bloblets of mercury amalgam on a silver surface which produce the Daguerreotype image are usually less than a micron (one thousandth of a millimetre) wide and high – often only a tenth of that." (Maynard, 1997 p. 34)

Maynard is right to posit the analogue as a constituent in nature by spontaneous reaction, but that is to ignore the industrial production of the analogue as a 'commodity' form developed simultaneously with the 'invention', for once this reaction to light is harnessed to photographic reproduction an economy of images emerges and the upshot was the 'commodification' of the monument.

The Pavillon de l'Horloge as Commodity Symbol:
Éduard Baldus, at roughly the same time as the first photograph of the Tour de St Jacques and continuing his work for the Historic Monuments Commission, was charged with the responsibility for a series of photographs of the Tuilieries Palace then under refurbishment to provide the grand and spectacular residence of the new Emperor and his court. Baldus, as he understood his mission, and showing how he had absorbed the lessons of Piranesi, left absolutely nothing to chance. He ordered the construction of a special platform to find the optimum point from which to express the central *pavillon* of the Tuilieries, *Pavillon de l'Horloge* (Fig. 1.5). The assumption must be that Baldus very quickly understood the State-role of his work and the importance of these types of images, not in terms of representations or pictures, but actually as Documents of State given sanction by the Emperor himself. Thus by this simple realisation Baldus'

photographs became synonymous with the Second Empire's monumental architecture as a symbol pertaining to the whole political organisation of the State itself.

Fig: 1.5. Éduard Baldus: *Pavillon de l'Horloge, Louvre, Paris*, 1853.
Salted paper print from a glass negative, 43.8 x 34.9 cm.

In consequence – and this is, arguably, only the case with Baldus – photography begins not only to encounter fully in its own space, architecture, but also then to draw attention to its actual place, to where it is located. So with Baldus, the presentation of place becomes potentially a document of *guarantee* that can be used to affirm a social or

political position. It is, I would argue, this documental image that configures the emergence of the Nation State as a symbol, which began in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. Places on the map are in Baldus' photography immediately visualised to the projection of the image and consequently are verifications of sites and their topographical coordinates. Thus the Baldus image of the Pavillon de l'Horloge (and the many other Louvre Pavillons he so assiduously documented over the years) attests to the existence of a political territory, which announces itself by its restored architectural symbols to be historically 'natural' in its emergence. In this sense, the ensuing naturalisation of the monument is given by a recognisable sign associated with a cathedral, or a spire, thus tying the commodity of the building to its theological origins as contiguous with the State. Baldus, like his employers Viollet–le–Duc and Mérimée, was ahead of Haussmann. Baldus' photographs will enable Haussmann to eventually gather for himself the wherewithal to unlock the Empire's historical space in the redesigning of the city's street plan to coincide with the renovated monuments.

Often in the accuracy provided by photographic representations, places identified with destinations dependent upon recognised nodal points of architecture and are given a role, unseen before the analogue had done its work, as the signifier of the image. Usually this is the image of a spire, a pointed shape, or, in this case of the Baldus, a dome abutting the sky. To carry this suggestion forward will be to assert that photography is likewise a place as it projects into a space. In this sense, photography is a complex medium and not a simple picturing.

Baldus perfects a style of photography that purveys the affect of being able to spontaneously represent what is presented to it, because it lends the aforementioned topology by means of the unity of space, to the time of the 'eternity' of its representation, circulating around the pivot of a significant building associated with the origins of the Empire. Baldus' photography adapts itself according to the subject to be photographed. In the huge camera the image was constructed over a period of time by calculations and adjustments before the shutter was released, an almost insignificant moment considering all the hard work that went before. Once in the camera the image appeared all at once in a unique way, which was not to define a fixed point but to assist in the production of another image, namely, the Napoleonic Empire.

In the mid 19th century and at the time of the Baldus, it is easy to appreciate how this was received in practice. The new form of representation, precisely because of its spatio–temporal effect, was considered a way of accurately locating the sites as

representations important to the political context. Unlike the relatively dispersed effect of the Daguerreotype and its predetermined composition, the image of the Pavillon de la Horloge is salient, the mass framed in its own space.

After photography, history is 'modernised', meaning that history is brought into the ever present, even as the image it produces still appears in an attitude of historic time, e.g. in the dress of the people or modes of transport. This adds to the historical image the capability of an immediate effect and is given latency in the present or in whatever new time in which the historical image is reviewed. Photographs become the *prima facie* evidence of present 'things' in the world as the photographic document takes on the object form of the past as a trace bearing note and they immediately lend the surplus of a reproducible nature to every object they reproduce in image form. As the photograph 're-presences' a thing, it also preserves it, lending a value in the precise sense of an excess of accumulated sentimental value. Karl Marx clearly sets out this possibility (without going so far as to discuss the photograph as a meta-commodity) in his theory of capitalist reproduction outlined in Volume 2 of *Capital*. (Marx, 1992)

This rhetorical figure of the photograph should be read as reproducible capital in Marx's schema and, in fact, exemplifies the role of the photograph in the political economy of the Empire for which the photographs were produced. This also explains the great difference to the Daguerreotype; this image by Baldus is of an entirely different and infinitely reproducible order. It should be noted here the rather lax terminology for this is to more precisely assert that photographic images have something in common with that commodity which Marx distinguished as operating between fixed and liquid capital. (Marx, 1992, pp. 237–261) Photographs and particularly those powerful photographs of the great historical-architectural monoliths of the French patrimony are, as already suggested, the analogue of investment capital and can thus function on a promise of security. It can reasonably be assumed then that these photographs are image commodities that have no material form other than the register of light on paper – that they are images constructed only by and in appearance transposed to paper. If their commodity is their paper form, then their excess is the promissory note, a form of credit. Is not their meaning in the fullest sense of the general economy then ultimately, the securitisation of Capital? It is important to be clear here; this is not to gainsay the Marxist form of production but, rather, the 'signifying' of production as produced by an image. Photography, once it is 'reproducible' (Baudrillard, 1982, pp. 17–20), takes its place as the first image of the 'sign' the very thing that overtakes production itself.

The period advanced by Baldus's photograph is the great era of money capitalism exemplified in the Second Empire by the emergence of the commodity-form and the profitable distinction between fluid capital and fixed capital. Marx, as noted by Walter Benjamin attributes to capitalism a graphic circulatory nature of transformation and repetition based not on the reality of objects but on their transition to pure commodities. (Benjamin, 2004, p. 461) With photography, a way of reproducing images or 'icons' is unearthed that forges alliances with the circulation of capital. However, the function of photography is to document or record the products of fixed capital such as buildings and railways and to reduce the physical object to its distributable form. Architectural images of State capital were to become most impressive in the burgeoning maturity of the photographic medium during the Second Republic.

What stands there (a building, a bridge, a territory) is in effect an image of capital circulation. Such photographs have no absolute place even as they fix an image associated with the propriety of the State; instead they enter into circulation and, as they do, develop the characteristics of fluid capital. For example, from within capital the image most suitable for the banknote is the *vignette*, the photograph used as design to embellish and identify value.

In the *Pavillon de l'Horloge*, the photograph becomes a form of address indicating a location of a place in time. This supremely detailed and structured image of the grandest of the pavillions, after its make-over as part of the continued work to complete the Louvre, is a document eminently suited for circulation as money. It is an image that identifies the modern State with the naturalised greatness of the past at the same time as displaying the pristine appearance of its recovery. As images then suitable for capital, the Baldus satisfies the criteria of the State in an image-commodity form.

Reconstructed Illusion; the Progress of Haussmann:

The Baldus is, though, an illusion, a mere shadow on a piece of paper of a certain dimension, upon which the idealisation of an Empire is represented. It is also a legal document of the State. It would receive the Imperial stamp of Napoleon III and is thus also an official document and one intended to make a statement consistent with other statements that would be emitted by the government's agencies. In particular, it could be seen alongside the plans announced from the Emperor's office on the appointment of Baron Haussmann in 1853. This is how the image gains its authority, not only by the skill of Baldus, which was considerable, but also by the conferring of a status that

ratifies the historic image of the building. It announces its restoration and points forward like a signpost to the future of what the Empire will become. Thus the place of the photograph is linked to the monogram of the Emperor (evidenced by its spectacular renovation) and cannot be separated from the essence of significance of the *Pavillon* itself. The resulting image has all the 'right' qualities; it is both grandiose and sombre. The details are enlivened by the absolutely correct light of day to display the architectural mass and its ornamentation, "from chimney to plinth and from general view to minute sculptural detail." (Daniel, 1994, p. 59)

The photograph is an exemplary form of the layering of pediments, caryatids, lintels, niches and friezes, which can be read in the surplus of power evinced by the image as representing the historical destiny of the greatest architect of Empire, Napoleon III himself, to unite the Tuilieries to the remaining section of the Louvre. Baldus by then had become the messenger of progress for the highest office in the whole of France and the greatest design plan envisioned by the Empire that would reach its apotheosis in the Tour de St. Jacques. It should be noted here that the fate of the *Pavillon* was to be one of violent destruction in the Commune, burnt along with the rest of the palace in May 1871. Baldus's image is a contradiction: it is an image of the solid foundation of the Napoleonic State, and simultaneously an illusion, a mere phenomenon of light. At the very moment that the photograph is viewed in all its magnificence, it reveals the instability of the Republic, and along with it, the lineage of Napoleon himself. Baldus' photograph is a ruin in the making; a memory of destruction that would occur under circumstances that the citizens of Paris would rather forget. In this circuit of desire and destruction, the image translates from effect to affect, and in so doing acquires the nature of a new commodity, a virtual thing irreducible to its place.

The transposition underlying this process, therefore, supplies additional value to the image, that of rarity, a form of power. The conclusion to be drawn here is that the appearance of the image in the photograph, which is no longer in existence, is given a new presence that comes replete with values based upon feeling. Arguably, this marks the beginning of a new approach to the 'capital value' of the image as the ultimate state of capital itself; to have power over desire and thus the projection of destiny.

With photography, architecture is shouldered with the task of representation by legal–political sanction and the result is a document much more real than the architect's plans. This would explain the enthusiasms of Napoleon and Haussmann for high quality photographic documents. In essence, it could be suggested that by the time the *Pavillon*

photograph was made, architecture was already under the influence of photography, precisely because it lent it commodity value. At the same time as the restoration of the name 'Napoleon' to the head of the French state, architecture in turn, was dominated by a historicism insisting upon those same supposedly immutable values for which the photograph supplied a virtually perfect vehicle. This occurs at the very moment when Marx was declaring the very "melting into air" (Berman, 1983, p. 92) of all values by the commodity and the reification of its illusion. This provides a suitable metaphor equivalent to the chemical transformation of light by which photography yields a photograph, and considered the ideal sublimated commodity form, *because* it takes place in the thrall of modernity's link to the invention of capital. Photographs are the place-markers of this story and yet endure beyond it to ideas of post-history, the reiteration of a historical present.

The Genesis of the Second Photograph of the Tour de St. Jacques; Dégagement:
The significance of Baldus's work at the Tour de St. Jacques has only really emerged in the last twenty years. (Bergdoll, 1994) What is important is that the photographs represent a rarity value and are also of such superb quality that they permit close study of the sites in both. Although Bergdoll does not carry out a direct comparison between the photographs, he nonetheless presents the possibilities through which they can be discussed that most exemplify the "monumental images that captured and the enhanced the aesthetic of the new Paris." (Bergdoll, 1994, p. 108)

In some respects Bergdoll's view is unusual because the photographer most associated with Haussmann is Charles Marville. In publications that deal with Haussmannisation, Baldus is singularly absent and Marville's work regularly featured in some quantity. But there is a caveat undisclosed by Bergdoll, which is that Marville was the archivist picture–maker of Haussmann; in making thousands of images of Haussmann's progress and his innovations of street facilities and furniture as well as documenting the process of piercing, *percement* by the demolition teams, he actually conjures up a graphic and journalistic view of Haussmann's work insofar as the pictorial conventions utilised by it are dependent on the picturesque. Baldus on the other hand eschewed the pictorial. His work is marked by orthogonal frontality and by his own version of Haussmannisation, which is the imposition of a surface integrated into the flat plane of the photograph's space. More so than Marville, Baldus intuitively understood architectural engineering as an extension of photography and the process of making an image that dominates its

context. Baldus' work is then firmly in the category of the architectural. If Marville's photographs are essentially *percements*, (Fig. 1.6) then Baldus' are in essence more accountable in terms of their documentary value. They express the monumental flatness of the plate more firmly and remain always present to their structure as photographic plates supported by the image.

It is by their fastidious imprint that Baldus presents to the Emperor a properly imperial, majestic image in such a way that persuades of a document of State. Baldus' photographs anticipate their role given Imperial sanction. Although over the years Baldus and Marville fairly frequently photographed the same buildings, they were to promote it on two distinct levels. Baldus made the perfected image; the angle of view, the framing, the aperture, the use of the surface to 'resonate' the image in anticipation of the duration of the shutter required to align the building to its surface. Marville, on the other hand, makes do with being on the ground at the right time and effectively using his camera like an "x-ray beam" recording the cutting open of the city. (Morris–Hambourg, 1981, unpaginated)

Fig. 1.6. Charles Marville: *Piercing the Avenue Opéra*, 1861. Albumen silver print.

If *percement* was the meaning of photography for Haussmann when Marville was behind the camera, a word in use by Haussmann's teams to describe the remorseless destruction of buildings by going right through them, the word for Baldus was *dégagement*, whereby the building, or monument, is separated out from its surround and given space in which to appear in a context of its new surroundings. *Dégagement* was a term first used by Baldus and later borrowed by Haussmann's employees. It was a word the photographer used to describe his working method of painting out on the paper negatives any obstruction that interrupted the depiction of the monument to be photographed. An example is Baldus' 1853 photograph of the Pantheon (Fig. 1.7) where the top two storeys of the building on the left side of Rue Soufflot have been painted out on the paper negative as they intruded too much into the façade of the church and fenced in the profile.

Fig. 1.7 Édouard Baldus: *The Pantheon*, 1853. Salted paper print from a paper negative, 33.5 x 43 cm.

Barry Bergdoll argues that the principle of *dégagement* was aptly demonstrated by photography in the four images that Baldus presented to the Ministry of the Interior just one week prior to Haussmann's appointment. These included the first photograph of the

Tour de St Jacques, and similarly, a first photograph of the church opposite the east front of the Louvre, the Saint–Germain l'Auxerrois, and finally two more photographs that can be assumed (at least one of them) to be of the Pantheon. Both the *Pantheon* and the *St–Germain Auxerrois* photographs were the first images in a prolonged dialogue with the buildings undertaken by Baldus. These, unlike the Tour de St Jacques, were photographed before their actual dégagement, and restoration (although Baldus returned to photograph the Saint–Germain Auxerrois in 1858). This was followed by a further six photographs, that Bergdoll claims, clearly anticipated Haussmann's plans for a "sequence of monuments […] aligned along the east–west axis running from the Arc de Triomphe at the Étoile via the Louvre to the Hôtel de Ville." (Bergdoll, 1994, p.108)

The unique quality of the first photograph of the tower is that it shows *dégagement* actually in progress in the scene. Baldus had no need to disengage the finished print as the angle of view was obtained without encountering any obstructions. Although there are many photographs by Baldus that do show the progress of renovations (such as at the Louvre), this first photograph of the Tour de St Jacques has a powerful sense of apocalypse and danger. It is an image that foreshadows the history of the Second Empire, and presages a state of ruination that will only come to reality in the violent eruptions of the Commune. The first photograph of the Tour de St Jacques, then, is an image unique in Baldus's portfolio as it conveys a sense of the devastation wreaked by Haussmann's own version of *dégagement* in an area of the city that was a hub of dwellings, small trades and shops.

Baldus' camera appears to be on slightly raised ground, whether by a temporary platform, or perched on outworkings. The lens has a focal length of about 150 mm, a standard lens for such a view. The camera does not seek to record anything other than the architecture of the tower and its immediate context. The lower third appears particularly scarred. The edifice is shown in high-resolution detail and is printed up to a large scale for the time at around 17 x 14 inches. Three or four drainage gargoyles are poking out on the left flank of the tower, but appear to be damaged and around the apex another group of drains reach out above some ornate Gothic tracery. On the top there is the wooden hut that would have housed the winching machinery for controlling the crucible that would have utilised the ropes and pulleys that once serviced the bells.

The image of the tower is stark and desolate, blackened by its years as a shot factory. It is also curiously smoothed by the lack of decorations. The building also displays some war damage either from 1793 when it was decommissioned as a church and possibly

also other street conflicts. Baldus, in fact, photographed the building from Rue Rivoli probably from a raised pavement made by the outworkings of the site clearance. The apron in front of the building would have been the position of the nave and transept of the church until decommissioning. The marks of this are clearly seen on the tower and elsewhere. Where the building had been stripped of its body, raw brickwork shows, and pale scars appear to scorch the surface. The richness of the contrasts and tone on the body of the tower are extraordinarily rendered and increases a sense of palpable presence. On the top of the high tower two sculpted figures are visible, a gryphon atop the buttress and, on the other side, a horse rearing up as if to leap from the tower. To the right of the gryphon another small hut is standing and to its right an industrial chimney. The building's vertiginous façade presents an inscrutable outlook, with screened vents like eyes downcast to the ground below. There is evidence that the tower may have continued in use as a factory; a small workshop with a sign outside it has been built into the footings between the buttresses.

The gutted apartments close to the tower demonstrate yet again the demolition technique of *dégagement* whereby tenement buildings are split off and removed so revealing the end facing walls and the exposed passageways of staircases and chimneys. Here a whole and sizeable block has been part demolished and is now barely recognisable from its earlier role as dwelling houses. Over on the other side, to the far left there are row of buildings on the Rue de Rivoli which appear to be semi-occupied shops with awnings clearly visible. The square itself is also supporting some commercial activity. To the centre of the photograph, and by a series of steps leading up to what was once the transept, there is a market stall selling religious reliquaries or small figurines. To the right of this stands a lamppost alongside a stack of wooden piles. Meanwhile, up on the site itself, there is little evidence that work on the area has begun; a wagon loaded with stones, some stacks of salvage awaiting clearance. The entire site appears deserted with no visible figures present.

All that is conveyed by this photograph is precisely what Haussmann would be interested in divesting from the building. He would not have wished to see the tower reconnected with its missing body to become a place of worship, nor indeed to have any other function, but rather to revive the tower as a work of art. This would have been uppermost in the mind of the architect, and also in the Ministries, where the influence of Mérimée had won the resources for high quality restorations. The very act of restoring the old monument, which itself was an attempt to restore the glory of the old as new,

was intended to demonstrate the enduring traditions of craftsman building, as well as the primacy of the heritage itself for the French nation.

The Tour de St. Jacques was to become one of the most commanding advertisements for the reforms of Haussmann and, it has to be assumed, shortly after Baldus' photograph work began on the tower. The fact that neither Baldus nor Marville made photographs of the restoration process itself could be significant. Photographs were usually made to inform of the progress of works, as at the Louvre (Baldus) or at Opera (Marville) where there are many photographs of the work in progress. The status of the photographer was very much on the level of a profession organised as a business, and they would have received a commission for a certain number of plates. There is no evidence that commissioned photographers were employed on a waged basis as members of a labouring class, and neither were they tradesmen like stonemasons. Baldus possessed a recognised visual intelligence attuned to the requirements of the architect as well as being highly skilled in optics and chemistry. Moreover, the process of photography was expensive and in all probability Baldus was only commissioned to do the two extant photographs of the work on the tower discussed here. It is worth noting that those photographers able to bid for commissions on the great architectural projects had either been amateurs or, like Baldus, had been painters. (Daniel, 1994, p. 19) More photographs of the Tour de St. Jacques were obviously not considered a priority; the really important work was to effect the restoration in relative secrecy. Indeed the kind of work on the tower was not without dangers, as the proposed restorations were very ambitious involving workmen at the very top of the tower and substantial encasements extending from the ground where a new base was to be constructed. Jacks were used to suspend the edifice *en bloc* to facilitate the rebuilding of the base and this work would have required very dense scaffolding so enclosing as to be virtually another shell slung around the tower and concealing it from view.

Judged by the fact that Baldus returned to the monument five years later would probably be a fair indication of the time that the renovations took. When Baldus sets up his camera again, he confronts a completely new building; clean, tall, almost white, with sharply defined traceries of gothic carving, and niches now occupied by saintly figures, the edifice looming up impressively over its site (Fig. 1.8).
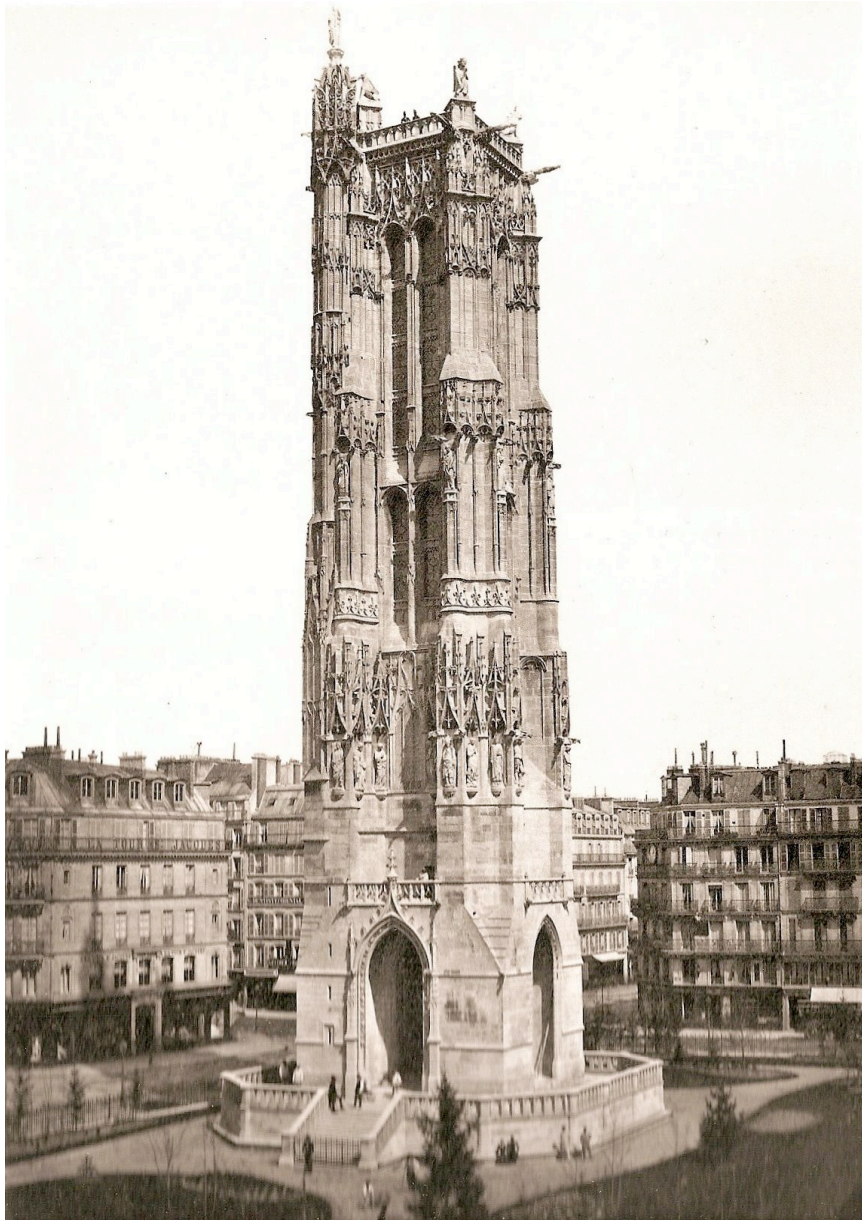
Fig. 1.8. Édouard Baldus: *The Tour de St. Jacques,* 1858. Albumen silver
print from glass negative, 44.1 x 32.8 cm.
It is a stunning contrast to the first image; now the tower stands tall in its own momentous
space. But, the new monument, it appears, requires the emptying of the content of the old and
the reconstruction is not to a memory, but to forgetting and distraction – to 'tourism'.

The Second Photograph of the Tour de St. Jacques:

Five years had elapsed between the two photographs. In the meantime Baldus had built

one of the most successful architectural and monumental photography businesses in the

whole of Europe. He had been engaged directly by the Emperor Napoleon III to

photograph the work to restore the Louvre, which would finally complete the rectangle

of the courtyard by linking up to the Tuilieries Palace, Napoleon's residence in the city.

Baldus would make more than a thousand photographs there between 1855 and 1865,

some of which – the series of photographs of the *pavillons* – are some of the finest examples of his architectural photography.

Furthermore, he had continued his work to produce highly defined, large scale photographs of the monuments of Paris, making extensive use of *dégagement* to privilege the building's mass. He had also continued his 'engineering' work on the railway projects and in the process had returned to the Midi and other areas of provincial France. He had continued to work on the project to construct an additional tower at the Saint–Germain Auxerrois, which he photographed on a snowy morning in the winter of 1861 (Fig. 1.9).

This project at the church of Saint–Germain roughly parallels the work on the Tour de St. Jacques beginning in 1853. The church was to be built on the site where an original one had existed, but was destroyed during the religious conflicts of 1566, events that are also connected to the historical interest shown in the Tour de St. Jacques. The new tower was designed and built, again by Ballu and Baldus photographed the results in 1861.

Fig. 1.9. Édouard Baldus: *Church of the Saint–Germain l'Auxerrois*, 1861. Albumen silver print from a glass negative, 20.6 x 26.7 cm.

Technically, Baldus had made some changes to his methods during this time. He had abandoned paper negatives and begun to work with the wet collodion process. This meant a much simpler preparation process as well as more rapid printing. The glass plate was coated with a solution of silver salts and placed in a dark slide whilst still wet. Advantages included faster shooting speeds and greater flexibility of printing but the disadvantage was that painting out on the plates was not as easy as on the paper negative. Nonetheless the advances outweighed these drawbacks and the sheer quality of the print produced by the wet collodion process was superlative in terms of tonal contrasts and detailing. The paper negative of the first photograph had produced a slight cast over the print that gave it a soft, magenta hue even though the detail was superbly maintained. The glass negative increased definition and contrast and gave the photographs a cooler even crystalline surface of deep blacks and silver white tones more in keeping with the attributes of the Daguerreotype, but on a much bigger scale.

The second photograph of the Tour de St. Jacques presents a great contrast to the first one, which is borne out by a direct comparison of the two photographs. If the first tower was black, dirty, and surrounded by ruination and dereliction, this tower is white and surrounded by signs of prosperity and civility. The tower also seems bigger, a more eloquent and brand new architectural statement, with high quality craftsmanship in evidence on every level. The carvings of the figures of saints, newly installed in niches, empty in the first photograph, are here given great emphasis. All the scars of the old tower have been covered over and reintegrated or erased without trace.

The restoration to the stonework appears to have been almost a rebuilding. It is as if a completely new edifice has been lowered like a great sheath over the old stump. This is most notable on the west-facing buttress, which has been transformed into a tower housing a spiral staircase that would convey visitors all the way to the top; an ideal gambit for the tourist attraction. Throughout, Ballu's masons superbly simulated the Gothic tracery whilst also enlarging the appearance of the whole edifice and structurally raising it on the new base. The catastrophic look of the old tower had been replaced by a spectacle attesting to the complete renovation of that part of the city.

The reconstruction also configured the Gothic to the use of the neutral apartment block architecture favoured by Haussmann. The gothic (small 'g') has been made to harmonise pleasingly with the newly renovated backdrop with smart looking shops at the ground floor levels and newly installed mansard roofs. The rebuilt apartment blocks themselves are subtly scaled so as not to crowd the building – an exercise in

dégagement as good as any in the whole of Haussmann's reforms. Again there is a cost; the buildings do not appear to be housing blocks for those displaced by the work. As the indigenous urban population is displaced, so another kind of inhabitant, the tourist, is served by the many hotels clustered around the new monument.
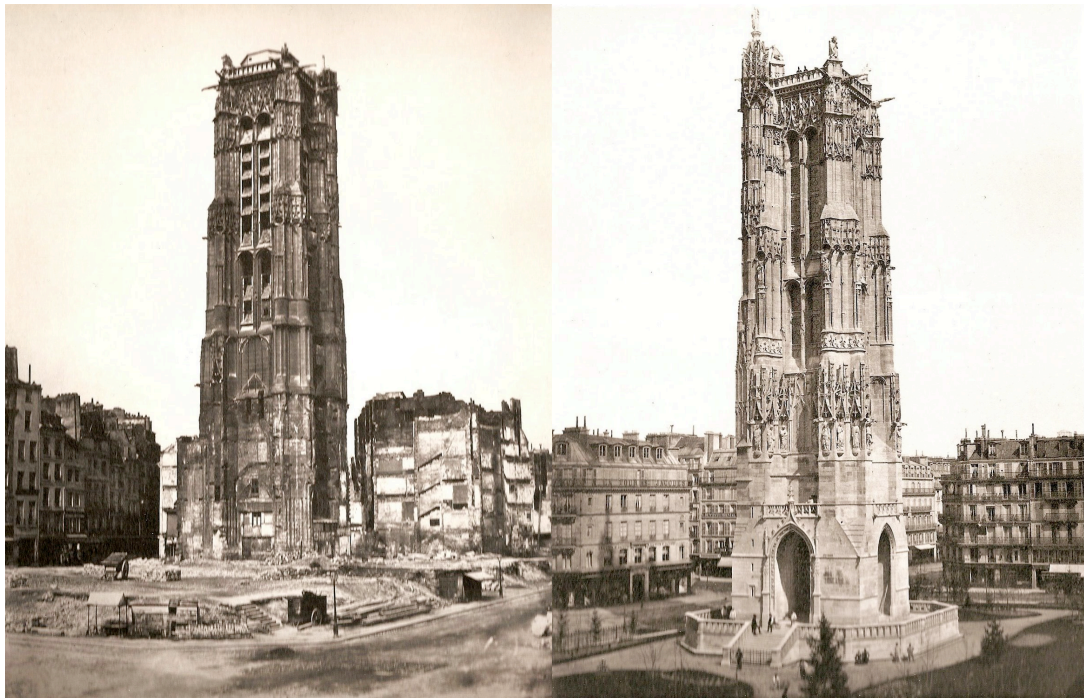
Fig.1.10 Édouard Baldus: *The Tour de St. Jaques* before and after restoration (my composite).

The biggest change is the base. The whole site has been excavated down to below the level of the tower to create an attractive shallow basin for a small park modelled, according to Giedion, on the London Squares so admired by Napoleon III. This is emphasised when the two images are seen together (Fig. 1.10) although it is easy to detect that the viewpoint in both is from the same angle, suggesting that Haussmann's offices would be interested in such a comparison. However, the elevation is very different. The reason for this is that other buildings would also have appeared enabling Baldus to gain an elevated floor in which to set up the camera apparatus. This position is exactly halfway up the height of the tower, and when using a 90 mm. lens, is the optimum height for a shot commensurate with the scale of the site.

Perhaps it is a moot point that Baldus' photographs are both brilliant and stolid; they represent the apex of the science of architectural photography even as they also produce the perfect image of Haussmann's Empire; incredible attention to detail, superb staging, yet pervaded by entropy, unable to escape the historical destiny to which it appeals. The

angle of view also suggests something else; that Baldus had seen drawings of the intended restoration before he made the first photograph and was able to select that particular angle because it would be the position of the major addition to the old tower, the proscenium reached by a grand staircase from which to enter and ascend to the top. The abutment where the former nave of the church joined the tower has been completely opened out to reveal a huge porch announcing the way in and up. Fine restoration and additional work has been carried out at the top. The gryphon is still there but the prancing horse has been replaced by a sculpture of a saint now standing over the entrance to the roof of the tower. The horse that was there now appears on the opposite corner. The long drainage gargoyles have been cleaned up and remain clearly visible, jutting out from the parapet. The tower's increased size is not just down to the renovations and is partly the illusion afforded by Baldus' higher camera position.

Now the Tour de St Jacques is properly disengaged; it arises in its own space unencumbered and everything around it is in harmony with it. At the very top, two tiny figures peer over the balustrade. Other figures are standing below, directed no doubt by Baldus's assistants. Their spacing suggests an advertising of the new kind of gathering of individuals envisaged by Haussmann. 'Bourgeois' individuals representing different social levels are occupied in the enjoyment of leisure and distraction, as well as the opportunity to enjoy the spectacle offered by the tower's viewpoint. The whole image is a statement of a new urbanism, the planned monument that is, for its own sake, an artistic monument.

This assertion of the identification of the historic monument with the artistic monument is common in the mid 19th century. It marked the rationale for the resurrection of monumentality *per se* in the context of the new historicism coincidental with the emergence of the Nation State. The historian responsible for the critical exegesis of such analogies between the artistic and historical, ruthlessly exposing the presuppositions of the art industry, was Alois Riegl. According to Kurt Forster, Riegl's concept of the 19th century 'cult' of the monument involved differentiating between 'intentional' and 'unintentional' monuments. The former are those designated by clear lineages to their names such as in cathedrals, palaces or more humbly in tombstones, whereas the latter can include monumental buildings and structures which suffer the vagaries of interpretation becoming "in effect the homeless of history." (Forster, 1980, p. 618) The ruined monument is particularly significant for Riegl because in the 19th century it attests to realisations of the subjective nature of time; a sense of loss is felt in the face of

the ruin. What is interesting about the Tour de St. Jacques is that it translates back and forth across the two modes, moving from intentionally commemorative monument in the original Gothic church, then to the ruin where it becomes unintentional and 'homeless' and then finally it is brought back again in its restoration, but to be a neo–historical intentional monument. It would be interesting to base further research on Riegl's method by suggesting that the photographs themselves are subject to the 'cult' of the art monument, represented by their rarity value, and the fact that they are prized not just for the artistic quality of the photography, but as a unique document of architectural history.

A New Public Space or a Space for a New Public;

What can be made of the stark contrast between the two photographs? Leaving aside all the issues that may be related to the actual monument in terms of its original commemorative function which now seems virtually irrelevant, it becomes clear that the monument is staged; but as precisely what? To compare the two photographs leaves a different impression from simply visiting the tower or seeing any of the photographs on their own as one contextualises the other.

The ruined or destroyed monument of the first photograph implied by the blackened tower is redolent of the old in its spectral appearance. In one sense it can be bracketed out, even forgotten, having served its purpose in being presented to Haussmann at his 'meeting' to discuss the resumption of works on the Rivoli extension. The second photograph of the Tour de St. Jacques publicises the positive signs of its redemption, as if to say the new height of the tower is itself a sign of protection by the patrimony. Despite this obvious observation, the redemption goes further. The new tower obliterates the old, but it does so by simulating the look of the old, as a new 'old'. Thus the new tower plays a game of monumentalisation; it is to suggest that history itself is incompatible with the spectacle offered.

The photograph of the old tower had been a document to be presented to the Minister as a record of its condition. Baldus would only be concerned that the Ministry received the photograph on time and in good print. No doubt, the Commisiones Historique were keen to see the building renovated to its former glory and to maintain its newly won, but somewhat dubious status as one of the great late Gothic towers of the whole of France, right here in the centre of Paris. The resulting new Tour de St Jacques would be a triumph of restoration aesthetics and helpfully resolve the need for a beacon to express

the historical meaning of Haussmann's continued attempts to reshape the city at the crux of the north-south and east-west crossing that the tower adorned.

There are a number of ways to assess this. The first is that Haussmann reasons the relic, because of its advantageous location to be a navigational landmark at the crossroads. Secondly, the monument is a genuinely important addition to the city's history as witness to the slaughter of the Protestants in 1566 and thereby set up links to the St Germain Auxerrois, 1.5 km. to the west. Thirdly, the renovated monument would thus encourage the civility of the area adjacent to the Hôtel de Ville from where all the political insurgencies seem to emanate and yet is also the seat of the Prefect himself. The additional benefit here is that the need for a smaller park space around which traffic could circulate to regulate and enhance the journey into the financial district on the Ile de la Cité is met. In other words the re-design of the area and renovation of the monument was part of an integrated architectural plan. By comparing the two photographs it becomes clear that Haussmannisation was the imposition of the historicist blanket intended to spuriously represent, but in fact to neutralise the potential historical significance of the structure.

The re-commemoration of the monument's place in history would suggest that the monument be a tool determined by sovereign authority rather than a contingency of history. Determined or officially designated monuments would then be those that can be re-used and given different situation where and when they might be needed. This produces a rather absurd idea, yet one at the very core of the Republic – that monuments are useful objects because they have a practical mystique.

The monument that can be unveiled as part of a process of reification of the State form, where the state itself becomes a recognisable logo manifested in the Napoleonic 'N' appearing in many place including the Louvre, becomes a key component of the commoditisation of the political state under the Second Empire. It is this movement of the commodity that puts into question the existence of the political itself. This is to announce a crisis of representation in the unresolvable tension between the Imperial throne and the social Republic; the former masks the latter. David Harvey suggests that this tension results in two modernities, which are opposed to each other represented by two distinct modes of being. On the one hand, the determination of the remnants of the Ancien Regime to maintain property rights at all costs and on the other those, such as Louis Blanqui, J.P. Proudhon and Jules Ferry, who had favoured the social republic. (Harvey, 2006, p. 71) For this latter group the enemy was precisely the Empire's

attempt at immortality by the erection of images of State, not withstanding the wide streets that bisected and disengaged the working class quarters of the city. The architectural photography employed by the Ministry to plan and assay the destructions was also seen in the same light and the superficiality of the medium was to become identified with the figure of Napoleon as exemplifying the corruption of his regime.

> "We can assert that first generation photography, which was largely in the hands of professional producers, overwhelmingly reinforced the status quo – especially the capitalist and increasingly free market system of which it was part. […] Photographs could expose the horrors of the current world – the ill-housed and ill-clothed, the malnourished, abused and unhealthy… but could not easily communicate blame or uncover causes (and therefore suggest solutions) of the troubling conditions." (McCauley, 1994, p. 313)

When the monumental projects of the past wore down, including Napoleon's own ill-starred Empire, as in the old Tour de St. Jacques, then the photograph begins to give vent to a truer meaning; that of the rise and then the Fall was ably exploited in its uncanny medieval dimension and representing all that the bourgeois feared of monsters, vampires and werewolves by writers like Victor Hugo. The blackened tower before renovation was a reminder, reinforced in Baldus' great photograph that the Empire must ultimately sink back into the mire of history from which it came.

On the political level the crisis – which was to come to a head in 1870 – was whether the city and its population could be conceived as a viable Republic or, if the appropriations of space by the wealthy bourgeois were to be accorded its justification by the eternity of Imperial rule. "How could that powerful association between the city and republic as a body politic be sustained? How even might the city be represented once its status as a sentient being and a body politic were denied?" (Harvey, 2006, p. 86)

The crisis of the Second Republic is a fundamentally political one in the sense of who the Republic was for and who best represented its historical destiny. It would appear that the quarrel was fought as much in *salons* as on the streets. Essentially it was a struggle over the autonomy and representation of space, of the body and the 'body politic' (Harvey, 2006, p. 221) and of the city as sentient being.

At precisely the period during which the Tour de St. Jacques was renovated, civil relations entered into a new phase because of a deepening of economic and social divisions. Although in painting, Realists like Courbet and Manet were intent on putting a mirror to the face of bourgeois hypocrisy, to the extent they were expelled from the

Salon and held to absurd ridicule by the bourgeoisie. Important though this was it was a crisis of aesthetics whereas the deeper crisis represented fundamental class divisions. The crisis then is coincidental with the contradiction inherent in the Republic as an entity. The great majority of the population would have scoffed at the whole idea of the new Tour de St. Jacques as the working class district in which it had stood was rudely shifted further and further east along Rivoli. For this reason, it was vital that Haussmann did not lose control of the streets. Photography was instrumental to ensure a sense of purpose and containment, indicating that an image made acted as a contract to prevent the complete disintegration of public space. Photography became the model identifying the Republic and Baldus, with his superb craftsmanship with both camera and ensuing print, was expert at producing such required photographs.

By concentrating almost exclusively on architecture, his photography surrendered any attempt to represent the political. The architectural photograph is inherently a rather neutral and technical affair, which accounts for the many hundreds of photographs produced to illustrate the reforms of Haussmann that are empty of people. This was not only the fault of the long exposures; the other reason for all this emptiness was that it was the way the streets really were. The destruction of public space meant the disappearance of the people into ever more distant enclaves cut off from the inner arrondissements, the temporary camps and slums. The photographer follows this dramatic migration. Baldus enters the spaces already emptied of their erstwhile inhabitants as if nothing should be allowed to interfere with the ideal technological synthesis of photography to architecture. It marks in the history of photography the very moment when the documentation of the building outstrips the real thing. This is not to be an image of the Tour de St Jacques which escapes its history; rather it is to reveal the phantasmic illusion of the tower as it is transformed into a sarcophagus devoid of anything but the most cursory of memorial functions.

Summary:

The Tour de St. Jacques was essentially secularised, turned into a piece of decoration devoid of any real significance and known as a novel tourist attraction. Thus the monument becomes the empty core, the very 'zone' of alienation, of Haussmann's design for Empire. It is equivalent to the memory of the future, the signifier of a polity much greater than its actual existence. The reality of the monument is in Baldus's first image, the blackened ruin in its strange limbo. The difference between the two

photographs shows the movement from a revolutionary panic to the new power exemplified by the sanitised and depopulated space that central Paris had become under its new masters.

Baldus is the photographer closest to the spirit of Haussmann's idealism. Baldus constructs an image that lends an appearance of monumentality by asserting the photographic architecturality of the building. The mission of Haussmann, namely to utilise the monuments of Paris as the modern intersections that complete the meaning of the new city, was fully realised by Baldus. The photographs, rather than the monuments are important for their place in the history of photography. When traditional forms are cast into new modes as was the achievement of Haussmann, it is to question the meaning and value, if not the actual existence, of things. Baldus' photographs transcend these questions by creating their own evidence for their material existence.

The relation of property to sovereign power also undergoes radical changes insofar as Haussmann's *dégagement* involved the paying-off to the tune of many millions of francs the bourgeoisie who supported the Emperor and profited greatly from Haussmann, but who would also force his resignation in 1869. From that date the Second Empire launched itself into irrevocable decline and terrible fall. Haussmann and the photography of his achievements crystallised the surface of a new imperialism. The Tour de St. Jacques soars over the master plan of the Empire.

This new space, which Haussmann sought, is essentially a kind of sterile environment. It is historicist as it recognises its eternal future in the past. Technological inventions appear to be, but the start of the process of visualisation projecting a new spatial and historical foundation. This need not be progressive, or to appeal to any majority constituency to be effective: rather it may be progressive in reverse, that is to say reactionary and aimed at reinstituting a historical vision that actually never existed other than in the fantasy of the Napoleonic Empire. The consequences of this and Haussmann's canny insight, was to suggest that before it is modernised, the Tour de St. Jacques must be historicised, given another cause by representation. Haussmann and his craftsmen, architects and the superb photography of Baldus, succeeded in edifying it to a monumental tourist attraction.

Basing a vision on the desire to instil a historicist will, sets in motion an economy, not of profit, but of loss of the social substance that might even have supported such an Empire. The Empire of Napoleon III is condemned by its own style. With Baldus' photography this disaster is staved off. The Tour de St Jacques is then immediately

assimilated to a tradition of ordered representation in which objects are placed and arranged in spatio-temporal harmony. A Cartesian dialectic filtered by romantic positivism? This contradiction is particularly evident because there are two photographs. The first one precedes Haussmann's vision and the second one confirms it. Immediately on the production of the second photograph a shift in the power of representation has been affected.

CHAPTER 2

Barricade Typology

Introduction:

The ambition of this chapter is to show how the barricade as a typological form comes to represent the Paris Commune of 1871 as an image of resistance. The idea of the barricade as a structure is to be examined through frames of reference that will go some way to explain the continuing fascination of the Commune, which was a very short lived event. The images it has left imprinted in several hundred photographs attest to the way that the Communards appropriated the wide spaces of Haussmann and created there, in effect, a state of emergency that prompted such a cruel response from the National Government. However, in recording barricades by photography much is revealed on aspects of the Commune's own sense of history – or rather lack of it – as there is no account of the Commune from within, nor is there a history of the Commune *by* the Commune in contradistinction to any memoirs that may have been published by individual participants. The histories of the Commune that I have accessed, do not deal with the question of the Commune as 'immanent' history. They do not refer to an image of the Commune that comes from within the immediacy of the insurrection. The result is that the metaphor of the Commune is lost. This lack of immanence, of the 'being there' of an image of history, is not simply to reinstate the importance of the Commune in the history and archaeology of Socialism nor is it to overlook the terrible destruction wreaked by the Communards. Rather, it is to raise the question of the *images* of the Commune and their typology and status as in themselves having been somewhat overlooked.

Most of the extant alternative histories have centred upon popular research, for example, by Jacques Rancière into the songs of the Commune and the theatre of the left-wing cabarets. (Rifkin, 1979, p. 207) However, that changed in 2006 when the Commune historian, Jean Barronet, working with archivists and technicians at the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, mounted an exhibition, *Une Regard d'une Parisien sur le Commune*, which brought together many superb photographs from various collections which, along with Baronnet's own commentary (Baronnet, 2006), gave vivid expression

to the Commune through the images that it had left imprinted in the archives. Furthermore this was supported by the discovery of the work of amateur photographer, Hippolyte Blancard, who recorded the Commune in a series of stereographs, which Baronnet digitized into single shots and reprinted to a superbly high level. It was as if a new window had opened on those dark days of April–May 1871. Many of the major destructions and the legacy of ruin had been meticulously documented by Blancard, partly at least for commercial reasons, but the new images also brought to light – when seen in the context of those professional photographers who had remained in the city during the insurrection – a whole new understanding of the richness of Commune photography marking as it did a watershed in the history of French photography.

It is hard from this distance in time to understand the Commune in the wake of the fall of the Second Republic and the shattering of the ideal spaces built by Haussmann in the capital city. Photography as a profession, as a means of documentation and reportage, all changed in those moments; there was shift in the photographic metaphor away from technical romanticism of critics like Ernest Lacan, to a new demand, a new photography appropriate to what it was like to be caught in the thrall of historical events.

The struggle between the Communard social republic and the forces of order smarting under the humiliation of the Prussian invasion of the previous year was a combustible mix. Yet the photography is 'calm', if such word can be used in a violent situation, curiously civil and yet, as will be argued, immanently allegorical. This calm passivity is to suggest that whilst the photographs are of buildings, ruins and barricades as well as many of the individuals who lived and died in those months, they also recount another story one that cannot be easily assimilated to formal causes, but somehow remains in exception. No longer was the powerful edifice of the Empire, Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris, the locus of representation, but its inverse. The blockage of the barricade then was to give vent to the people's alienation from the Second Empire in the most forceful of terms – the attempt to declare a Socialist Republic in the capital city. This chapter records how photography as architectural medium met its denouement in 1871. The great age of architectural photography discussed in the previous chapter and like the Second Empire that spawned it, was dying.

What follows below is intended as a brief overview of the historical events leading up to the declaration of the Commune of Paris, which was inaugurated on the twenty eighth of March 1871 and ended on the twenty eighth of May of the same year, a duration of only two months. The overview presented here as well as facts about the Commune is

guided by two main sources. The first is Alistair Horne's book first published in 1965, *The Fall of Paris: The Siege and the Commune 1870-71* which gives a vivid account of the period and is grounded in clearly laid out chapters with useful key events summed up in the appendix. (Horne, 2007) Horne sees the Commune very much in the power vacuum created in the siege by the Prussian Army in 1870 following the capture of Napoleon III and the Prussian's subsequent defeat of the French at Sedan in the Argonne. Horne does not have any ideological sympathy with the Commune, but he does recognize the importance of Karl Marx's journalistic reports as enabling the legend of the Commune to far outstrip the importance of it historically. This importance of the Commune is historically negative and is to do with the 'expiations', the violent and bloody retribution taken by the French government after their troops had secured the city in late May 1871. Horne does not shirk the horror of these expatiations.

The second reference is Robert Tombs', *The Wars Against Paris* (Tombs, 1981) a detailed account of the military campaign prosecuted by the Prussians against Paris and then again by the French also against their own capital in the following year. Tomb's account covers matters of military tactics and he is generally very sceptical of the abilities of the Commune army, National Guard, to defend Paris in any meaningful sense. Tombs also offers interesting views on barricades which he somewhat relegates to a footnote as they offered little more than symbolic resistance to the oncoming and better equipped and trained French Army. It is hoped the reader will bear with this occasional explanation of historical facts, as it is necessary to understand something of the purely historical context of the Commune in order to be able to address the issues of barricading and its photography, which is the subject of this chapter.

What follows is not a history of the Commune, but a prolonged reflection of its impact on a moment in the history of photography, which coincided with a crisis of the political republic. I am interested to explore the coincidence of the Commune and its photography in terms of photography's emergence as the 'apparatus' of bureaucracy applied to the documentation of the trauma of suspended animation in space and time brought about under siege conditions, the *État de Siege* (state of siege) under which the Commune would live and die. The chapter's overarching aim is to attempt to form a limit point: how does photography define its own epochal meaning in an event thus enframed, by the camera apparatus recording it?

Historical Context: The Fall of the Second Empire:

On the fourth of September 1870, the Second Empire of France was effectively brought to a close by the announcement of the formation of an emergency government of France, The Government of National Defense. In the hostilities, which had broken out in the Franco–Prussian conflict on nineteenth of July 1870, Napoleon III had on sixteenth of August 1870, surrendered to the Prussians at the battle of Sedan in north-eastern France and was subsequently taken into temporary custody by the Prussian General, Otto von Bismarck. Exile in England for him and his family would soon follow. The emergency government of France, known as the Government of National Defense was faced with the imminent and catastrophic prospect of a siege of the city of Paris by the Prussian army under the command of General von Moltke. The siege began in the same month, September, and had a devastating impact on the city during the freezing winter of 1870–71 including privations of food and the collapse of the city's economy. (Horne, 2007, p. 177) All attempts by the French at utilising remaining regular army and National Guard units to break out of the siege failed.

Paris, as it suffered in the siege was in the process of separating from the rest of France. The emergency government of National Defense, in desperation, appealed to the Prussian Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, to call a ceasefire in order to give time for the French to elect a National Assembly mandated to sue for a peace settlement. The ceasefire was eventually signed by the staunch Republican, Jules Favre, and Bismarck on twenty eighth January 1871 and gave the Government of National Defense the time, until the nineteenth of February, in which to call the election before hostilities would begin again. The election took place quickly and duly returned, on the eighth of February, enough Deputies to form the National Assembly to be based in Bordeaux. But the results of this election virtually excluded candidates from the Republican left and the results "hit Republican Paris like a thunderbolt". (Horne, 2007, 256)

The process of obtaining the peace settlement was vexed; several times Bismarck threatened to resume hostilities. The former Leader of the Assembly, the right wing Adolphe Thiers replaced Favre at the negotiating table and rung concessions out of Bismarck to extend the ceasefire and allow time for the new Assembly to sue for peace. A settlement was eventually reached in late February and the Treaty was signed on the twenty–sixth February 1871. (Horne, 2007, p. 268) France was to pay reparations to the Prussians of several million Francs and also to cede to them Alsace Lorraine and a source of historical dispute between the two powers. Discontent increased rapidly in

Paris over this 'settlement' as well as against the generally conservative and right wing, make-up of the Assembly.

Paris grew restless throughout February and early March and an air of militancy against the Assembly was exacerbated by the humiliation of a parade of twenty thousand Prussian soldiers along the Champs Elysses on the first of March. As the Prussians paraded past monuments shrouded in black crepe, the National Guard stood with their backs turned as a sign of contempt. Later that day bonfires were lit on the route taken by the Prussians to purify the air of their presence. However, the atmosphere remained toxic. Barricades began to appear around the eighth March; the Assembly, still ensconced in the provinces, forbade any opposition press to try and stave off any publicity for a potential rebellion.

The key date was the eighteenth March when the arsenal of cannons forged during the siege and placed on the hill of Montmartre by the National Guard became the site of a confrontation with the regular army ordered to retrieve the cannon. When the cannon were not handed over, Generals Clément–Thomas and Lecomte, ordered their men to open fire, but the men lowered their rifles and refused to fire on their compatriots. Instead the cannon were seized by the National Guard on behalf of the citizens of Paris at Montmartre and Clément – Thomas and Lecomte, were shot. After this, the Assembly, almost immediately and along with the mayors and a number of the regular army garrisons, departed from both Paris and Bordeaux to relocate at Versailles. The subsequent power vacuum, seriously exacerbated by the departure of the mayors, created a febrile atmosphere of popular revolution and street festivity including demonstrations and marching. A motley group of Socialists – Internationalists, anarchist revolutionaries and pacifist reformers, but almost all Republicans – gathered in the *Hôtel de Ville* to rather chaotically thrash out a provisional government. A few days later the Commune of Paris was declared on twenty-eight March. (Horne, 2007, p. 277)

The arrival of a People's Republic right in the heart of the capital of France already reeling under the siege by the Prussian army caused consternation, not least amongst the Prussians who were still emplaced at various points outside the fortifications. Now, defended by about thirty thousand uniformed National Guard of whom about two thirds were armed with some military training – but of somewhat dubious discipline and fighting ability (Tombs, 1981, p. 162) – Paris grasped the opportunity to go it alone and live, at last, the Social Republic that had been in promise since 1848. In the event the Commune would be short, brutal, and way outlived by its legend. It can be taken as a

singular event in modern history, the first expression of a 'revolutionary' Communist state.

It was not, however, a revolution as such and nor, in consequence, the way Karl Marx envisioned such an event. Marx in exile in London had kept a keen eye on the events unfolding in Paris where he had been a journalist in the 1840's. His interest was based on his wish for an International revolution of the proletariat. The Commune did not actually declare itself in these terms and neither did it take shape as a socialist city–state in the manner Marx would have advocated, by the seizure of the means of production including the Banque de France, which remained untouched. Indeed this clearly was evidence that the Commune was more of a local struggle. The demands of the insurgency were thus quite parochial and were not framed in the language of revolution, but more in terms of conditions of employment in bakeries and various other civil matters. As Engels famously, but erroneously, put it, the Commune was a "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the "flag of the Commune is the flag of the World republic". (Engels in Marx, 2011, unpaginated) These sentiments have both spread the legend and overridden the more prosaic truth since then.

There were so many differing factions and counter–factions amongst the Communards themselves and this tended to outweigh any unity of will to Revolution. There were internal conflicts between the Proudhonist and Blanquist factions (followers of J. P. Proudhon's humanist socialism and Blanqui's neo-anarchism) as well as those who subscribed to the Working Men's International or saw themselves as Jacobins and other veterans from 1848. No revolutionary leader – no Danton or Robespierre – emerged as they had in 1789. Perhaps if the National Guard and remnants of the regular army so committed, could have struck at Versailles in the early days as advocated by Rossel the only Communard General, the Commune would have achieved a revolutionary victory, but such a battle never happened and the revolution was lost, unable to exploit the legacy of the "clash between the politics of Empire and the economy of Capital". (Harvey, 2006, p. 308) The Commune was left powerless to resolve the question of the Social Republic and the President of the Versailles Assembly, Adolphe Thiers and his military command simply waited their moment. As soon as the necessary accommodation with Bismarck was achieved, allowing for French prisoners of war to be released from their compounds in the Champagne–Ardennes, troop numbers available to Thiers swelled. With safe passage to Versailles assured and with General

Macmahon also released from captivity, the strike against the insurgency became inevitable.

For Marx, the revolutionary struggle required victory in a revolutionary war, but no such victory was forthcoming. The (red) 'specter' that Marx had predicted in the Communist manifesto (Marx and Engels, 2002, p. 218) may have reached its first expression in those brief months, but neither Marx nor the International "raised a finger to initiate the Commune". (Horne, 2007, p. 291) That very idea of the spectral, the haunting of the newly empowered middle class by some 'thing' in the form of a destructive force of history (memories of the Terror of 1794 still persisted) had for some time created unease and fear. When the Commune finally fell to the troops of the National Government under the overall command of Thiers and the leadership of Macmahon in the field, it was to be a reckoning with the forces of 'order' aimed at exorcising the 'red specter' for good and was, as a result, "an event of unparalled savagery." (Rifkin, 1979, p. 214)

The Inverse of Haussmann: the Barricade:

In the section that follows the establishing of barricades during the Commune will be discussed in their representation by photography. The barricade in photography, it is argued here, is a typology insofar as differences between kinds of barricade become apparent and that certain barricades functioned in particular ways in relation to their strategic locations. I should make it clear here that discussion of barricades as types is not that they were designated as such by the Communards although distinct types did emerge. It is the study of photographs that reveal their typologies as the barricades can be compared from within the archive of the photographs, thus a unity emerges of barricade typology that refers to the actual structures facilitated by the existence of the photographs. To think about the barricade structures through architectural analogy, perhaps for the first time offers the suggestion that such photographic documents are, in a certain sense, the true memorial of the Commune that prolongs interest in the revolutionary spirit and its sacrifices. David Harvey notes how the building of the Sacre Coeur, paid for by wealthy bankers with a generous donation from the State attempted to heal the wounds of the Commune. (Harvey 2006, p. 337) This expensive gesture missed the point, as the whole aim was to cover over the fundamental crisis; the continued postponement of the Socialist Republic.

In order to establish the necessary relation of boulevard to its barricading it is necessary to refer to Walter Benjamin who is first to shed light upon the relation of the wide boulevard to the actual events of barricade building. These paradoxes of space and history, which Haussmann designed and photographers like Éduard Baldus photographically 'engineered' presented to Benjamin the 'true goal' of Haussmannisation – the prevention of insurrection. (Benjamin, 2004) The reforms were akin to an act of cleansing or the clearing out of the old Fauborgs and with them, their history. Then came the widening of the streets into formidable avenues of space across which it would be almost impossible to construct *ad hoc* barriers. Long and straight boulevards and radial hubs supported by the strategic citing of barracks close to the railway stations were to present an image of a city under *de facto*, if not quite *de jure*, martial law. In terms of architectural styles, these were also given to the enhancement of Haussmann's street plans, neutral facades recalling toned down versions of Bernini's Versailles but now constructed over iron skeletons. Modern architecture as modern technology was confined behind the scenes, to Haussmann's plans to bring in a constant supply of fresh water by a system of viaducts and in the building of the railway termini also recruited to give the impression of Empire with elaborate neo–classical façades again held up by iron and steel frames. The modernisation of Paris as an Imperial capital also meant monumental street plans and very large buildings, as it was necessary to demonstrate the military power of the Empire as well as its cultural and historical place in world history.

Benjamin presented two short essays and a Convolute on the subject of Haussmannisation and barricading. His insight is to draw the contradiction of the two modes of construction into a similar space of alignment suggesting the street as a form, is political space *par excellence*. There are two papers in the Exposés, the first written in 1935 and a second in 1939. Both papers represent two similar levels of thought although the 1939 paper is distinguished by Benjamin's reflections on Louis Blanqui's cosmology as the form of the 'eternal return' for the Social Republic seeking redemption in the life of the stars. (Benjamin, 2004, p. 25) The reflections on Blanqui are carried over in the assertion that Haussmann's reforms were politically motivated to deal a deathblow to the proletariat. Then again in Convolute E, Benjamin presents a series of long quotes from journalistic and contemporary sources, most but not all, condemning Haussmann's handiwork. All the papers were put together as part of

Benjamin's mammoth study of 19th century Paris, the *Passagenwerk* or 'Arcades Project'. (Benjamin, 2004)

Benjamin's subheading for both the shorter papers is 'Haussmann, or the Barricades' and is intended to draw an analogy between Haussmann's work and the reappearance in 1871 of the barricade. The Convolute 'E' is titled 'Haussmannisation, Barricade Fighting' and is really a collection of reflections and quotes. It is in the 1935 exposé that Benjamin shows how the barricade was 'resurrected' in the Commune, but then that it "is stronger and better secured than ever […] stretches across the great boulevards, often reaching a height of two stories, and shields trenches behind it". The symbol of the barricade for Benjamin assumes greater political significance as it shatters the "phantasmagoria holding sway over the proletariat" that they "hand in hand with the bourgeoisie" will be the true victors of the revolutionary struggle thus "completing the work of 1789". (Benjamin, 2004, p. 12) The barricade then no longer signifies what it was purported to from its earlier incarnation in the Revolution of 1832 and again in 1848, but on the contrary, stakes out a new frontier in its reappearance. There can now be no dialogue between the bourgeoisie and the Communard and these new barricades are bold enough to wear their architectural semantics much more aggressively. The barricade thus delimits a typology of pure resistance and nothing less than a territorial border in this sense signifying a line that could not be crossed. The territorial function of the barricade still makes a political rather than a military statement. The construction, even of the very large barricades remained an interface between the powers and the people. This suggests that the Barricaders were well aware that their structures could not sustain much bombardment but that they served other semantical functions.

In summary, Benjamin's Exposé and Convolute link the barricade to the reshaping and securitisation of Paris by Haussmann. Benjamin outlines the main issues of the historical conflict of the Republic based upon the previous revolution of 1848 and the treachery of the rise of Napoleon III in the coup d'état of 1851. To take up Benjamin's breakthrough, the realisation that the barricade operates in the inverse way to the boulevard, is to open up a way of thinking about barricade typology as a signifying system of a symbolic rather than real architecture. The architectural 'image' is an inverse proposition to the formal architectural photography of the Second Empire that had been intent on the conservation and stability of symbolic meanings. However, the task confronting the photographer active in the Commune established, by sheer force of event, a different approach. Now there is a photographic representation, which captures

a limited duration, a temporariness of structure and the photograph means something that will pass away, not that which is intended as eternal. What follows is an overview of how this is to be approached. The task then will be to map these observations over onto the photographs themselves.

Barricade Types:

The departure point here is Mark Traugott's research into barricade building in the history of rebellion. (Traugott, 2010) Traugott's work does not contradict the rough outline above, but his remit does not include Benjamin's Convolute. Fundamentally, the reason for barricading is not given in the expectation of bloody conflict but its very prevention, as the barricade is intended to be a temporary interface and thus a site at which to arrive at an accommodation, an agreement acceptable to both sides.

Traugott points out the number of barricades built in an insurgency tend to decline over time; those that are built however, are larger and more strategically sited in terms of monumental function rather than as defended barriers. (Traugott, 2010, p. 9) The word 'barricades' comes from *barrique*, the name for a large barrel; traditionally these barrels filled with ballast of marl or sand were the basic building unit for the larger barricades. Another type of barricade, usually smaller assemblages of local material, was known colloquially as *pavé* after the stones commonly used in their construction. The materials used were not particularly efficient, and neither were the sites chosen always the most strategic in term of defense. Places of symbolic significance were traditionally barricaded but there was no cohesive link between the barriers to make an integrated line of defense. Resistance was primarily symbolic insofar as many of the largest structures were concerned to seal off the main squares in recognition of their order of significance. The barricade wall was to stake out zones of symbolic or emblematic defence especially in the most politically sensitive areas of the central *arrondissements*. To these ends the barricades succeeded in forging the typological development of the simple barricade to the fortress-type barricade as a recognisable and powerful architecture of resistance.

Traugott places emphasis on the event of barricading as a 'snapshot' of the forces of collective action in terms of representation; presumably this would relate to style of barricade, available weaponry in the *repertoire* of insurgency. (Traugott, 2010, p. 43) The idea that Traugott intimates is that the 1871 barricades were ambitious precisely because of the challenge posed to them by Haussmann. That is they deliberately went to

the very wide and strategically symbolic squares and sites; and also made a point of surrounding the monuments such as the Tour de St Jacques, Hotel de Ville, Arc de Triomphe and the Place Vendôme, where Haussmann had had his apartments. Thus the barricade was an event of architectural resistance, by a type of *ad hoc* architecture or a negative architecture in the obstruction of architecture proper. In this way the architecture of the barricade also became an architectural statement. (Traugott, 2010, p. 51)

Traugott argues against a classical history of the barricade (it is possible to infer that certain architectures of the classical world – the Second Punic Wars 219 BC or 146 BC when defenders of Carthage took up positions behind the rubble of their own dwellings for instance) because the barricade is a 'conceptual' structure and the concept of barricading does not emerge until 1588. In some sense then, the barricade has a history in the Baroque and is part of a movement toward the general mobilisation of the population in certain war situations, as the classical barricade was not constructed with the idea of insurgency, but of simple military defense. There is no question that this history in its typology does emerge in comparison with the history of military fortifications during the Baroque and were extensively modernised in and around Paris. (Traugott, 2010, p. 17)

The major barricades that returned to the streets in 1871 represented technological developments far beyond those of 1848. In 1871, there are three main types that can be identified in the many photographs that were made at the time; the ersatz, spontaneous or what could be called the 'picket' type barricade, quickly erected and manned, constructed out of street furniture and loose building material such as the gratings that Haussmann ordered to stabilise the many trees he had planted (Fig. 2.1); second, the 'built' barricade made of paving bricks or large stone-blocks but again in a simple barrier form blocking the street but with a less temporary look to the arrangement (Fig. 2.2). Finally, the major barricades most of which were designed by the engineer Gaillard. These were impressive defensive complexes (Fig. 2.3).

The largest barricades intended to seal off the centre of Paris, were constructed as bulwarks with a smooth glacis and crenelated parapet. The Madeleine, for example, was served by one vast labyrinth in Rue Royale. Place Vendôme, on the other hand, was barricaded on all sides with a major obstacle blocking Rue Castiglione and smaller ones all the other access routes in the square. The Pantheon was also fully barricaded again to the same plan – one *grand* barricade supplemented by smaller barricades of the

pavée type. The Hôtel de Ville was also surrounded by a number of these stone–block structures. The bridges here, as well as the surrounding streets, all had *pavées* on them, none of them vast or high, but easily replenished simply by adding stones.

Fig. 2.1. Anonymous: *Barricade du Boulevard de Puebla, hauteurs de Ménilmontant 18 mars 1871*. This shows the basic barricade thrown up quite spontaneously and of combined materials including sandbags, paving stones, furniture and interestingly, Haussmann's tree base grills. Despite the hasty erection these barricades–and this one in particular –were often more resistant than the larger barricades.

Fig. 2.2. Anonymous: *Barricade in Blvd. Haussmann*, May 1871. This is a very good example of a *pavée* barricade. Note also the cannon embrasures and the awning over shops still open during the uprising.
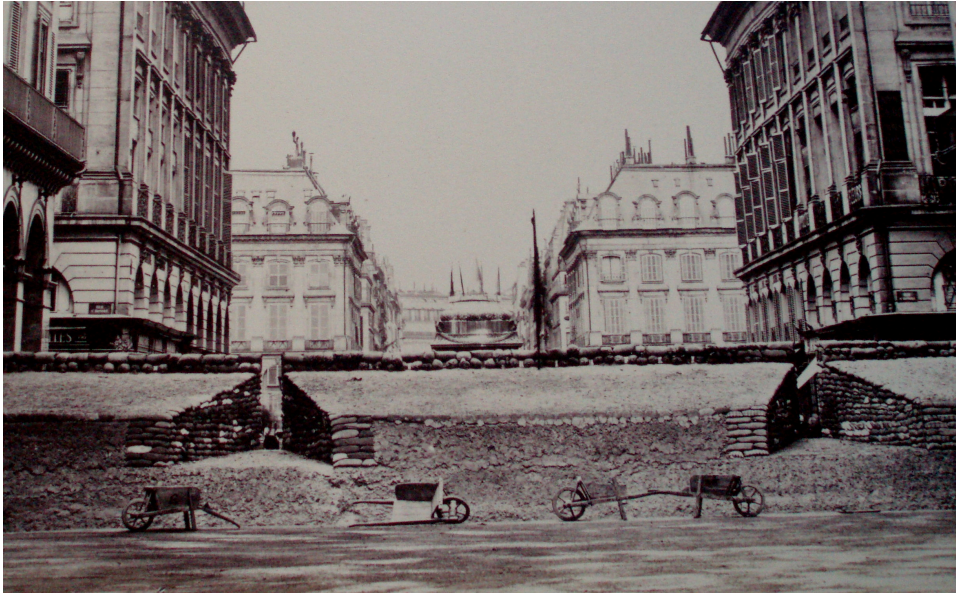
Fig. 2.3. A. Leibert: *Rue Castiglione Barricade*, May 1871. Albumen print. This clearly shows the scale of the structure and the maintenance work required to retain the sandbagged capped sloping parapet. Note also the depth of the enfilade ports clearly constructed out of sandbags. Leibert's photograph was made after the sixteenth May, as only the stump of the Vendôme Column remains.

The Hôtel de Ville also, having previously been the site of Haussmann's offices, became the HQ of the Commune and was considered a key site. The Rivoli barricade also protected it. This massive structure, designed by Gaillard and which sat imposingly between the Hôtel de Ville and the Tour de St Jacques, was to prohibit access along Rivoli presumed (correctly) to be the main route along which Government forces would proceed in order to encircle the main centre of the uprising and take control of the Hôtel de Ville. The barricade on Rivoli was a formidable structure of nearly fifty metres depth and a height of around four metres. Other powerfully barricaded sites were the Place de l'Eau (now the Place de la Republique), Boulevard Voltaire, which guarded Republique from the south west and then at Bastille, which was heavily defended by stone-block barricades in serried ranks making passage through them anything but straightforward. (Tombs, 1981, p. 150)

As would be expected, stone-block structures and temporary pickets were ubiquitous in the eastern arrondissements. In the areas of Montmartre, Ménilmontant, Bellville and Villete, especially around the former customs barrier, the Rotonde, where there were many combination barricades mixing features from *pavée* and ersatz types. However, these rough obstructions still represented a challenge to the attacker as the streets were narrow and neighbouring buildings could contain snipers. Generally speaking, as one

moved further east so the barricades themselves tended to become of the combined type that could be reinforced very quickly if the need arose. Even these barriers could be built to quite formidable dimensions and crossing them was no easy matter largely because, as Tombs points out, their informal nature made the National Guard cannon more of a threat. Often larger barricades would work to 'barricade' the barricader if made too high.

Napoléon Gaillard's barricades were based on a principle of redoubts and sloping bulwarks reminiscent of the earthwork defenses of the Middle Ages. To this end, there were sometimes trenches dug in front of the first wall often so deep as to expose sewer drainage channels. (Note: Fig. 2.3 where a deep trench cuts across the street roughly in line with the wheelbarrows; it is more clearly seen in Fig. 2.8, below.) Then the redoubts and parapets rose from the ditches using the excavation to shape them. These major barricades were planned to geometric ground plans typified by fanned firing alleys. The first layers of redoubts, (clearly visible in Fig. 2.3, where they form a smooth angled surface) were of considerable thickness and built up with render over various kinds of ballast, even domestic mattresses and furniture, to form the parapet, which sloped sometimes very steeply. Wooden crates, barrels filled with marl and large paving stones (although Haussmann had preferred tarmacadam to prevent this) made up the foundations. Sandbags then encased the whole ensemble and the tops of the parapets were finally smoothed over with marl. These heavily built up structures, often rising to heights of 4 meters at their highest parapet, were also deep–lying labyrinths (Fig. 2.4) with saps and further redoubts occurring to block any easy passage through the barrier even if the first lines had been crossed. In plan, crenelated or curved walls permitting 180-degree fire typified the layouts. Iron grilles separated the various levels and to permit access by reinforcements. Further in an invader would face muzzle ports for cannon and musket slits.

Fig. 2.4 is a photograph by Hippolyte Collard the founder of the Collard Frères firm of industrial photographers commissioned by the Barricades Commission to record one of Gaillard's most prestigious projects, the barricade of the Rue Royale. The barricade was intended to defend the Madeleine from any attack, which would most probably come from the Place de la Concorde. It was also supposed that Concorde itself could be covered by raking fire from the stockade. What is apparent, apart from Gaillard himself posed with bare head to the sentry's right, is the extraordinary width of the structure and its articulation of the surrounding architecture. Its scale required careful planning and

design rather than simply the construction of a barrier. The form clearly has a complexity; it is compact and yet also carries with it a strong expression of defiance – indeed it makes for a menacing intrusion into the classical building types between which it sits. The photograph enhances this. What makes Collard's image so interesting is that it encapsulates the meaning of the rebellion in architectural terms suggestive of the contradiction of Haussmann and barricading so eloquently referred to by Benjamin. (Benjamin, 2004, pps. 11–13) (It is interesting to speculate that Benjamin may have encountered this photograph in the Bibliothèque Nationale where he spent many hours researching the Arcades Project.) In the photograph it appears as if the function of the barrier is to *complete* the view of a historical monument. The structure's depth appears rather to ensure the integrity of Madeleine, which can be seen in the distance directly behind the barricade itself, which is photographed from a spot in the Place de la Concorde orthogonally in front of it. Consequently it is to harmonise by contradiction, the Corinthian columns and the Madeleine's pediment *with* the barricade architecture enframing it. The photograph reminds us that the temple of antiquity was also conceived as a fortress and by way of the image of history as progress, it is tempting to contrast Collard's image with one Baldus made of the Madeleine in 1855 (Fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.4. Hippolyte Collard: *Barricade in Rue Royale*, May 1871. Albumen silver print. Note the respect offered to the Madeleine and the illusion that the barricade recedes to the colonnade of the distant façade. The powerful architectural frontality of the photograph would seem to underscore that the defenders of the barricade saw themselves as the defenders of the city's spaces.
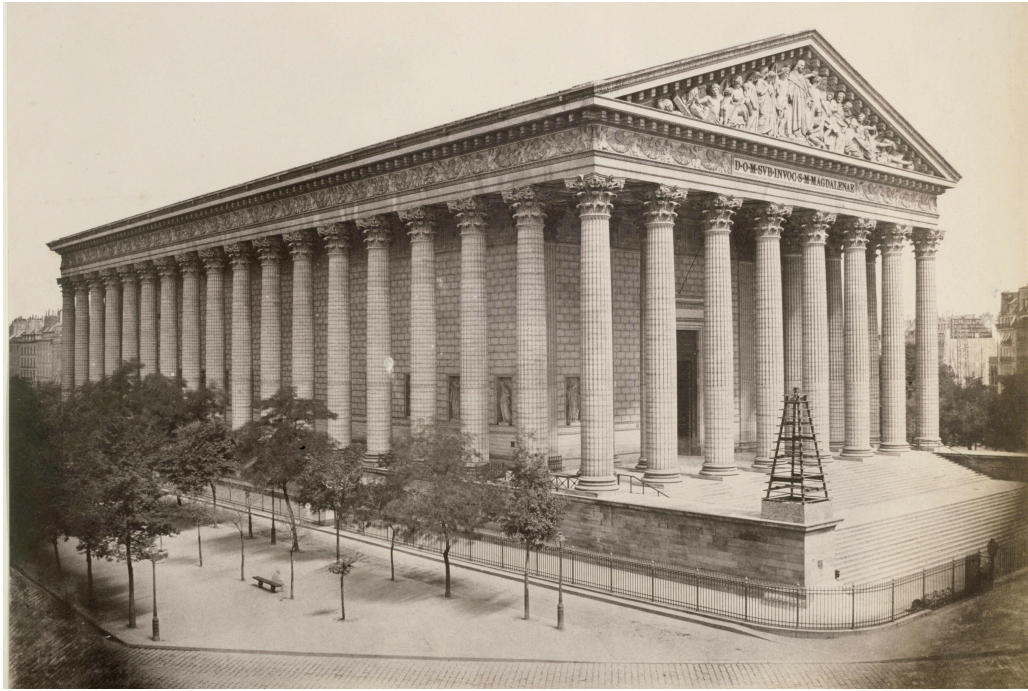
Fig. 2.5. Éduard Baldus: *The Madeleine*, 1855. Albumen print from a paper negative.

In the Baldus' image above, the temple is seen in three quarter view to all intents and purposes as if it had been so built in order for the photograph to persuade of a geometrical–ideal of the building in a logic of vision culminating in the sovereign gaze of the Emperor. This is borne out by the eye level, which is at exactly the horizontal mid–point and divides the photograph into two equal halves. This is then offset by the lead column (the one closest to the camera), which holds the corner of the pediment. There are then four corner columns in total (of which three can be seen) leaving the façade and the rear elevation with six central support columns and each side elevation with sixteen. What the photograph by Baldus achieves is the elevation of the building to the unity of its structure with the regime that it represents. By harnessing all the proportional logic of the building's architecture to the camera and by force of abstraction rendering the totality of representation to architecture derived from classical hieratical models, Baldus makes a statement involving the continuity of those models with the historical evolution of the Napoleonic State. Baldus' work then appropriates the Madeleine as a work of political art and lends its originality to the Empire, although the building is a copy of a Roman Temple in Nîmes, also photographed by Baldus. (Daniel, 1994, p. 31) In order to grasp the entire structure in precisely the way intended the camera was raised up on scaffolding specially erected for the shoot. This awesome demonstration is given scale by the tiny figure seated on a bench to the lower left in

amongst the copse of Haussmann's trees. The eloquence of this figure is a masterstroke by Baldus as it points to the everyman, the *petit bourgeois* citizen of the Republic included in the historic destiny of the perspective.

Now, in contrast, the reality of 1871 in the Collard: the Madeleine is ensconced on an island of sandbags and expecting to be the witness to a battle. But the context is more original as if to impart that the artwork of the building's architecture was always to serve as the backdrop to some potentially revolutionary political situation. The Madeleine is decontextualised by Collard as much as it is raised up by Baldus; now the image of the building is placed at the end of a long perspective; other pillared buildings lead to it; it seems almost lightweight in comparison. The suspicion is that this is an image that is made of something more openly political as the barricade thus restructures the temple. The Madeleine returned to the symbolical, theatrical function is repeating the emblem in the role of the fortress or, more precisely, is given the historical condition of its origin as a fortress typology. Now the people stand in the picture; the engineer is Gaillard, a working builder and graduate of the École and not the military elite, or the Beaux Arts. As well as Collard, the other photographer of note whose work on photographing barricades went beyond mere documentary recording was Auguste Bruno Braquehais (1823–1875). His photographs are different in style from the Collard. They tend to be more informal and unannounced; thus they are less technical, tending to show works in progress rather than the definitive view. Fig. 2.6 is a good example of this approach showing how the Rivoli Barricade was put together.

As in the Rue Royale, the designer and builder is Napoleon Gaillard. This is not a formal architectural photograph, but a journalistic one. Braquehais' reputation and his contacts with Communards most probably permitted a freedom of entry to such sites, but the picture is made on a shorter exposure time and the camera settings are also less resolved. Braquehais was not an architectural photographer like Collard, who had studied at the same École des Ponts et Chaussées as Gaillard and probably knew him well enough through the trades, but a jobbing photographer who mainly did theatrical tableaux. Traugott accords considerable importance to the École as a training ground for revolutionaries, with students taking an active role in the 1832 and 1848 Revolutions. (Traugott, 2010, p. 14) With an opportunist photographer like Braquehais, however, it is most likely that the Rivoli photograph below, was made 'on spec' and that he would be seeking at a later date (which of course never came) to sell it to the Barricade Commission. The rough foreground speaks of the lack of rehearsal for the photograph

as does the casual poses of the workers. Braquehais was careful to include the red flag already planted upon the parapet, the kind of image that could have led to awkward questions within a mere few weeks.

Fig. 2.6. Bruno Braquehais: *Rue de Rivoli Barricade under construction*, May 1871. The Commune had convened a 'Commission of Barricades' under the direction of Napoleon Gaillard who, like previous builders, had been educated at the École of Ponts et Chaussées. This barricade was one of the largest of the Commune barricades and was nicknamed after its maker, 'Château Gaillard'.

Braquehais in the Place Vendôme, April–May, 1871:

Braquehais' most interesting barricade photograph is the one he made as part of a series taken in the Place Vendôme, the most heavily barricaded square in Paris. In the lead up to the infamous destruction of the *Colonne* on sixteenth May 1871, photographers sought to get inside the square to record if not the event, the personalities of the Commune who visited to view the preparations, for example Leftist intellectuals like Eugène Pottier, an author of the 'International', or other leading Communards representative of the conflicting strands of Communardism as well as bystanders or National Guard interested in obtaining one of the photographs for the sake of posterity. Braquehais did not photograph the barricades themselves on this occasion, but instead a contraption, called the 'Barricade Engine', which was used to spread marl over the piles of barrels and sandbags that supported the barricade's structure. There is one rare image

here in this series (Fig. 2.7). It shows the engine along with the top hatted Minister of War, Charles Delescluze. On his left stands the Communard Minister for Foreign Affairs, Paschal Grousset (in front of the dozing sentry), and a third unnamed man, possibly the inventor of the engine. The photograph was most likely made in April 1871 also shows the monumental base of the Colonne, all that would remain after the column was felled on sixteenth May.

To enter the square would not be possible for just any photographer. Braquehais, who was deaf and dumb, which made it difficult for him to bid for Ministerial contracts, inhabited a certain margin of bohemian society and, in all probability, had contacts and/or sympathies with Communards. (McCauley, 1994) He also operated in the legal margins of acceptable images and did not submit all of them to the censor.

Many photographs produced by Braquehais then by-passed this process and were distributed clandestinely, which was a criminal offence, as was the large amount of pornography that emerged at the time from studios mostly in the working class districts of Bellville and Montmartre. (McCauley, 1994, p. 180) Perhaps, as McCauley suggests, this may have put Braquehais in contact with underground figures that he had got to know as part of his trading arrangements and from thereon to meet political dissidents.

Fig. 2.7. Bruno Braquehais: *'Trois passants curieux posant devant la colonne de la place Vendôme'*, March/April, 1871. Albumen print.

Note the poses that gradually change from left to right, in terms of formality culminating in the confident, relaxed pose of the engineer. There is a certain comedy here borne out by the insouciant young sentry at rest on the 'bed' of the machine. The shadow on the far left is presumably the sentry standing by his box. Close inspection reveals vague traces of other figures moving around the site and not registered by the long exposure. A few weeks later, Delescluze would be killed by the Versaillaise at the Voltaire barricade.

This is not to suggest a link to criminal activity (although Braquehais was later imprisoned for fraud), but that a culture existed that rubbed shoulders with a style of borderline existence equally as familiar to Braquehais as, say, to a painter like Courbet. Most professional photographers, the likes of Henri le Seq, Édouard Baldus, Charles Marville and Gustav le Grey, would have been vehemently anti-Communard as they had not only benefited hugely from the Emperor's largesse in dealings with his ministries, but also had their clients' interests and their own hard pressed businesses to protect. (Koetzle, 2000, p. 92) None of these men photographed during the insurgency. On the other hand the 'unremarkable' Braquehais, as well as having political sympathies with the left, may have also seen a commercial opportunity in the making of such journalistic photographs of which the one to be discussed here is a fine example. It is a fact that the largest single group of photographs left by the photographer on his death were taken during and just after the Commune. (McCauley, 1994, p. 187)

Photography and Commune Ideology:
The question of the ideological aspects of these photographs remains obscure. It is difficult from this perspective to define what ideology if any was shared. For sure willing or not, people became caught up in a major historical event but it is unlikely that any two individuals shared the same perspective of these events. It was an exceptional set of circumstances, but as a self-conscious revolt driven by an ideological framework, it is unlikely. Even Marx admitted that the Commune was not Socialist. (Marx, The Civil Wars in France, unpaginated) There is no doubt, however, that the Commune was a popular event in the initial phases with an almost carnival atmosphere which was to change as the weeks passed. Generally, the famous names in photography supported the Empire, the contrary being Nadar the portraitist who famously could not stomach the Emperor and refused his custom. Even he closed his business during the Commune and retreated to the provinces, as did many of the others. Did this mean that those who remained including Disdéri, Andrieu, Franck, Appelt, Richebourg and Leibert as well as the many anonymous photographers supported the Commune? It is unlikely that any of

these were active Communards and neither was it necessary to be so to remain in the city. Paris was not under the grip of a terror and in fact remained surprisingly open. It will probably remain unknown just how those photographers who were active felt about the situation. It is fairly sure that in Braquehais' case, being unable to neither speak nor hear may well have prompted stronger Communard sympathies. This is borne out by a comparison with another photographer of almost certain sympathy for the Versailles government, Hippolyte Blancard, a wealthy chemist and amateur photographer, discovered by Jean Baronnet. It is clear from Blancard's approach as well as the dandyish figures occasionally posed in his photographs that he was above all a producer of novel stereographs and thus a bourgeois photographer. (Baronnet, 2006, p. 41 and p. 129)

Blancard's achievement has only recently come to light following researches and extensive reprinting carried out by photographic archivist and Commune historian, Jean Barronet, and from whose catalogue the details of the Braquehais shown above (Fig. 2.7) are also taken. (Baronnet, 2006 p. 78) Amongst the very many superbly reproduced photographs of Blancard's work in newly digitised format, there is one fascinating image. Blancard shoots into the Place Vendôme from a distance on a second floor balcony in a building in Rue Castiglione (Fig. 2.8) during the preparations for the destruction and possibly around the same time that his counterpart, Braquehais was down in the square with his own camera.

What results from Blancard's somewhat precarious angle, is also a particularly good image of a barricade. It shows clearly the form and structure of the barrier and its lateral extension right into the adjacent buildings. There is a very deep trench in front of the rampart (first referred to in relation to Leibert's image, Fig. 2.3 above) and two fanned artillery embrasures. Note the wheelbarrows, which show the barricades weathered very quickly and had to be constantly maintained. In addition to the superb angle of vision and pin sharp focus, the photograph is of interest for the action in the square and beyond it further barricades extending into the far distance. Tiny figures blurred in movement, stand in small groups or are engaged in the engineering necessary to effect the fall of the hated monument. Baronnet informs us that the Place Vendôme was heavily fortified: *"Le gouvernement de la Commune siège à d'Hôtel de Ville, mais une force politique nouvelle s'impose: le Comité central de la Garde Nationale, qui transforme la place Vendome en fortresse."* (Baronnet, 2006, p. 66)

This state of affairs is borne out by the contrast between the civilities of the neo-baroque architecture – impassive witness to the whole event – and the buzzing activity of the square where Baronnet's image reveals that the *L'échaufaudage* (steam engine), which will permit the destruction of the column, is seen already constructed. (Baronnet, 2006, p. 67)

Fig. 2.8. Hippolyte Blancard: *La Colonne Vendôme mai, 1871.*
Digital print by Jean Baronnet, 2006, 25 x 20 cm from the original stereograph.
Note the extent of the trench in front of the barricade and the expression of distance from the action by the fact Blancard would not get entry to the Place. The steam engine, which would topple the monument, is the dark shape to the left of the column.

Subsequently, Blancard did gain access to the square after the column had been toppled (Fig. 2.9). Amidst the ruins of the column parts of the monument remain intact, but only the base still stands. And now the red flag, planted on the stump, flutters to a blur in the wind. Marx sums up the effect:

> "When the Commune took the management of the revolution in its own hands; when plain working men for the first time dared to infringe upon the governmental privilege of their natural superiors, and, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty…the old world writhed in convulsions of rage at

the sight of the Red Flag, the symbol of the Republic of Labour…" (Marx, 2011, p. 43)

The Vendôme Column had represented everything that offended not only the whole of the Republic, being a celebration of Napoleonic conquest, but also as far as painter, Gustav Courbet was concerned, modern realist taste as well. The Vendôme Column signified not the historical triumphs of the newly absented Emperor's uncle, Napoleon Bonaparte, but rather the denigration of the Social Republic and was considered a gross insult associated with the reprisals taken against the French working class in 1848. In the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, his angry and sarcastic tome to the imposture of Bonarpartism, Marx began with the comment, that the "Tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living." (Harvey, 2006, p. 308) This raises the question of the genealogy of fate that would create the revolutionary urge of a historical sense of a destiny arising in the belief that history's own autonomous movements would expose the contradictions of property and power. On this basis to aver that 'realism' amounted in some way to historicism in a marxist sense, supports the idea that Blancard's photograph of the fallen column, although intended as a 'bourgeois' souvenir, also transposes a historicist message becoming over time an important part of the event it was depicting.

The destruction of the column was intended as some kind of reparation, a release of energy and an attempt to escape from the inevitability of history. Such thoughts, accompanied the huge thud of the tower as it crashed to the sound of the Marseillaise being played, failed to drown out the sound of similar thuds, the shells of Thiers armies landing in Neuilly to the North West, *"une événement célèbre et dérisoire tout à la fois si l'on imagine ce qui passé à Neuilly au même moment."* (Baronnet, 2006 p. 68)

The column had stood like a black *assomoir* (truncheon) overlooking the square then, as now, one of the smartest of addresses in the city. The event of the destruction was obviously very popular judging by the numbers watching the preparations captured in Blancard's image. After the Commune, if one was identified as having played a role in the destruction for which the Braquehais pictures could be taken as *prima facie* evidence, there may have been severe repercussions including deportation and imprisonment, this latter the fate of Courbet who had to make reparations in terms of money to rebuild the monument and serve a five year prison sentence, later reduced to two years providing he left Paris, for his involvement in *la chute*.

In the end barricades did very little to stem Thiers' government troops when they eventually entered Paris by the Pont du Jour five days later on twenty-first May 1871. As already suggested the barricade was more a symbol of resistance and therefore had a political rather than a properly military function. This was cruelly borne out as the professional army made light work of most of the barricades. Even the largest were usually quickly overcome even though it took a number of days to surmount the Rivoli barricades because of the relatively narrow gauge of the street itself and the tenacity of the Fédérés who defended it. Similarly barricades at the Bastille and Villette were very resistant, but usually the barricade did not prevent the advance and as Robert Tombs (Tombs, 1984, p. 162) suggests, may have hindered the strategic defence of the city by the Fédérés because of reliance on barricading prevented the setting out of a properly integrated defensive line. For the invading army, there was no need to take a barricade head-on and risk casualties. Advancing troops had to sap through adjacent buildings and then take the barricade from behind. It was still a difficult task to enter the squares defended by the barricades. The spaces forced the Versaillaise to face up to the consequence of Haussmann's reforms as the wide-open Place Vendôme could be vulnerable to Fédérés cannon and thus "worked to the insurgents' advantage, for their artillery was able to sweep the squares and avenues, which brought the army's cautious advance through side streets, courtyards and houses to a halt." (Tombs, 1984 p. 156)

The Commune Monument:

What is apparent from the current perspective, after a time lapse of a hundred and fifty years, is the strangely out of time yet 'modern' appearance of the Barricades in respect of their enframing by either neo-classical 17th century buildings or by Haussmann's apartment blocks. It is as if locked in the emergency of the barricade there lurks a newer or very much older, form of space, either a return to the medieval fortress or the premature arrival of modern rationalist architecture and an example of Adolf Loos' form following function *avant le lettre*. The fleeting sense of the barricade sharing a historicist typology with other forms is as fascinating as the return to the future of history itself. Admittedly, without any evidence to back this up empirically, all such historicism is to interpret the photographic documentation as history, when all such documentation is fragmentary and hence a kind of allegory. All that remains of the barricade, after all built as temporary structures, are the archives of photographs. They have become the emblems of the Commune in documentary form. The question now is

how these documents allow us to form a photographically derived allegory of the monumental history of the barricade.

What becomes clear is that although the events of 1871 appeared to move very quickly, from inception to denouement, life in the Commune was unreal even dream-like as if slowed right down to a pace that could be captured by the technology available. Benjamin underscores this point in his rather strange Convolute Y on Photography in the *Passagenwerk*. (Benjamin, 2004, pps. 671–692) This is where Benjamin, in a series of quotations, ironically eulogises the commerce of photography in the dream–like stance of 'kitsch' painting by Antoine Wiertz, a somewhat over excited proselytizer who wrote in the very year of the Commune, of how the new medium of photography would eventually deliver romantic painting from its predicted demise: "When the Daguerreotype, this titan child, will have attained the age of maturity, when all its power and potential will have been unfolded, then the genius of art will suddenly seize it by the collar and exclaim: 'Mine! You are all mine now! We are going to work together." (Wiertz, quoted in Benjamin, 2004 p. 671) Benjamin suggests that photography's relation to the Paris of the Empire was specifically calibrated to the modes of consumption and the use of allegory in painting but typified in the new sensation of the photographic. Furthermore, the statuesque yet febrile academicism of salon painting typified by Wiertz' art, are taken from photography where the long exposures meant that people had to cease activity and massive objects such as buildings appear to be weighed down, anchored by the flat light produced by albumen. Do critical events then have some inbuilt temporality of their own? Are the images of the Commune specifically indexed to photography thus explaining why there were no great paintings of the events? Not even Courbet provided any images of the Commune.

Walter Benn Michaels has argued this point; that the relation of art to commerce is unwritten but implicit and that some element of bad faith conspires to undo the potential for freedom in both literature and politics. (Michaels, 1987) Symptomatically, commodity fetishism unites the image work, whether it is literature, journalism or a photograph, to the conditions of its production by the reification of surplus value. This is to turn the absolute permeation of commodity relations into a seemingly natural event, which in turn abounds with sentimental images such as those produced by Wiertz. The shared, divided mutuality of production the power of language and on the other hand the "power of effective physical realizations". The irony is that literature knows this as a negative value of its own trap "its modest confession that the emptily

limitless power of language severely restricts the authority of the writing and reading of literary texts."

> "The terms of literature's irony then even its self mockery and the terms of its claim to constitute a site for the critique of capitalist power are identical: literature, disembodied, is incapable of physical coercion but also, for the same reason, immune to physical coercion – it is empty but emptily limitless." (Michaels, 1987, p. 53)

In a sense then art is 'free', but utterly enchained to a deep level system of historically derived *apriori* representations, and it is precisely those relations that were shattered during the Commune making it impossible for a romantic critic like Ernest Lacan to engage with it. Thus the new photography as a form of literature encompassing the decisive events of the Commune remained mute as there was no possible critical language that could decipher it. Literature produces infinite verbal representations from within an already determined situation, whilst capital produces physical things: both are commodities of power. It is interesting to perhaps initiate the idea that the Commune, rather than being a threat to the French State was an event concerned at root with the aesthetics of behaviour seen by the representatives of bourgeois taste as an effrontery to the Empire that it had attempted to succeed. (Lacan, 1872, p. 2)

The idea that events and their representation are already in collusion prompts the thought that painting was also in a crisis at the time as the older salon style was fast becoming redundant and could no longer represent the historical other than by an arid form of academicism. The historical as the historical in itself had changed its quotient from stasis to movement to a new type of history that did not shy from the horror of its brute reality, "For the Realist, horror – like beauty or reality itself – cannot be universalized: it is bound to a concrete situation at a given moment in time." (Nochlin, 1984 p. 33) Photography had already anticipated this synchronicity of fateful coincidence of time and place from its inception, notable in Daguerre's photographs of the Boulevard du Temple, where the photographer himself steps forward to create such a momentous historical event and simultaneously has his shoes shined for the camera. (Batchen, 1999, pps. 133–136) The appearance of these Daguerreotypes showed that the visual register of class differences was suddenly brought to vivid and contemporary realization, going so far as to prompt the idea that reality contained much more than simply subjectivity based on the centrality of judgement, but serves to convey the existence of an actuality outside of subjective intuitions. Those Daguerreotypes lead

directly to Braquehais and Blancard by channels of distance based upon, not the reality of material base, but an impression of light on membrane. The contingency of the photograph, insofar as it introduces into historical representations the immanent and the immediate, testifies to that which has a cause in something 'other', the action unfolding in front of the camera. This other is what Giorgio Agamben, writing of the two Daguerreotypes, calls the "exigency" (Agamben, 2008, p. 25) the compulsion of photography to be seen by and through a different frame of reference. In the time of the Commune photography recognises that its reality exists only in its projection to a future. This externality is the allegorical content of the photograph as it appears as an inscription and an image. Two levels of time and action occur simultaneously affecting the relation between the inscription (temporal) and the image (spatial). The result is that temporisation and history are two relativities of space and time gathered together. Temporisation is time solidifying in the photograph of what will be history.

The perception of temporisation is for the first time effectively captured in the siege state and is positively iridescent in the newly reprinted Vendôme photographs of Blancard. The state of siege, *État de Siege*, a situation, ultimately of war, of the installation of emergency measures appears here alongside the photographs, which show it. These measures are those that suspend or override all laws, but especially those of 'normal' time and space. The effect is to enforce a legal deposition of temporisation and to heighten the long pause, the interregnum of the laws of motion. History beckons, but is postponed to the future; temporisation is detention in the empty present.

A subtext here would recognise the Commune not as revolutionary time, but the glaciation of time evidenced in the photographs – history containing its own specific 'monad' as a constellation contained in a unity. It is also to be recognised that in this there are other vectors to be explored in future research; the role of repetition and duration as events or folds in time, forming a more philosophical topography. Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze, 2003) thinks there is a different way to view historicity in the virtual through prehensions of the objects of history emerging through an 'electro-magnetic screen' as a datum. "At a given moment the (Great) pyramid (of Giza) prehends Napoleon's soldiers (forty centuries are prehending us), and inversely." (Deleuze, 2003, p. 78)

By the very lack of decisive event, the destruction of the Vendôme is a gesture intended to make *something* happen, to release tension and cause in Deleuze's terms a prehension of a space in time. As the Braquehais images attest, what we are witnessing is the

hypostatisation of time slowing down. The photograph (Fig. 2.7) is itself a monad, a completely self-contained constellation of actors and places before its irruption in the destruction. On the other hand, Blancard's photograph (Fig. 2.8) is the apprehension of the siege mentality, but for him, the barricade is a political and social abyss and his camera stays firmly in bourgeois reality. What he records from the side of 'right' and law is then a 'state of emergency' seen at once close up in the ruin (the allegory is here the wreck of the column) and also at a safe distance. The barricades themselves are forms that create spatial divisions and borders, but they are also 'blocks' on time and the process of happening. Those terrible slow weeks of the Commune are mirrored in such a way as to make them palatable and to show how the tragedy of the Commune is to suffer inevitable disaster and to become inexorably entwined to the extent that relativities of stasis and motion become fused. Something hangs heavily over the Braquehais picture made at the base of the Colonne (Fig. 2.7). It is a suspended moment, in itself a timeless prehension as if suddenly excavated from a space of the past like finding an explorer locked in the ice after one hundred and fifty years. Baronnet's singular achievement in bringing together the Braquehais image alongside those of Blancard is to offer redemption of sorts. It is the return of that which had been consigned to the future-past.

Photography as Allegory:

The exhumation of a moment when Delescluze and Grousset stood together for Braquehais' photograph is an image almost overloaded with signs and portents, which explains why it is also such a great photograph. I make this judgment in the light of Walter Benjamin's long essay, 'Allegory and Trauerspiel' which appears as the final section of *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (Benjamin, 2003) – having already discussed briefly how Benjamin has accorded the natural affinity of photography to the expressionist kitsch of Antoine Wiertz' salon paintings. It is my personal view that the essay by Benjamin in the final section of the Trauerspiel book represents his most profound thinking on art. The allegory of symbolism, taken in the form of the Baroque tragedy, marks where violent and overly theatrical gestures threaten to subvert the emergence of a subject. This is because the allegory of Benjamin is almost paradoxically to counter formalist abstractions in the situation of art and judgment. Behind the thrall of the final judgment of aesthetic taste, metaphors remain which support the *status quo* of aesthetics. Benjamin claims these metaphors have obscured

any dialectal rigour in art criticism throughout the nineteenth century in favour of the "ethical subject become absorbed in the individual". (Benjamin, 2003, p. 160) He revives the allegory in the dialectical rigour of the Baroque and makes use of what, to an Anglophone reader, are unknown texts such as Creuzer's, *Mythologie* in which Benjamin detects the essential difference between allegory and symbol:

> "….the latter signifies merely a general concept, or an idea which is different from itself; the former is the very incarnation or embodiment of the idea. In the former a process of substitution takes place […] in the latter the concept itself has descended into our physical world, and we see it directly in the image." (Benjamin, 2003, p. 164)

Thus the symbol takes the form of real art and allegory is left to pursue the contingent, the ephemeral and epigrammatic. Benjamin then recruits another of his sources, the historian, Görres, who challenges the separation of allegory as sign and symbol as 'being'.

> "This puts many things right…the measure of time for the experience of the symbol is the mystical instant in which the symbol assumes the meaning into its hidden interior. On the other hand allegory…has none of the disinterested self–sufficiency which is present in the apparently related intention of the sign…That worldly, historical breadth which Görres and Creuzer ascribe to allegorical intention is as natural history, as the earliest history of signifying intention." (Benjamin, 2003, p. 166)

Much of what Benjamin writes concerning the Mourning Plays of the Baroque is arcane, yet high-level scholarship, but which nonetheless resonates with the aesthetic divisions of modernity, as art for the absorbed individual, or for a different ethical subject, that of the common community.

For my purpose, the importance of Benjamin's text lies in its radicalisation of the allegorical in such a way as to allow for photography itself to be considered as allegorical, which is as a potentially subversive historical signifier. For example, the flag in Blancard's photograph of the ruined column (Fig. 2.9) is not a symbol, but is instead a new type of allegory, a 'conceptual' sign. Whist the flag appears black in the photograph we know it is 'red'. It is already a displacement factor of the photograph to conceptualise the red of the flag. The concept is that its reality is red and to think the red in the photographs is to 'colour' (i.e. to bring to vivid experience in the now) the entire scene as if it can transcend itself in the confrontation with the real. The red flag

succeeds in symbolising the universal solidarity of the working classes only insofar as in its representations it shifts from metaphor to metonymy, from thought to action. Its image, for which the Commune was the originary manifestation, would henceforth become one of the great tropes of modernity.

Fig. 2.9. Hippolyte Blancard: *Après la Chute, 16 mai, 1871*,
Digital print by Jean Baronnet, 2006, 20 x 17 cm from the original stereograph.
The cap of the column is clearly visible. The photograph is unique for the depiction of the red flag, which is seen as a blackish blur in the image but its presence floods the photograph. A question remains: why was the base of the column left intact? In all probability the base of the column was left to keep a powerful sign of the destruction in the public mind. Also, if the stump were removed there would be no obvious site of congregation, which was one of the purposes of the destruction, to take back the square for the 'people'.

The important point is that the flag is both inscribed in the photograph and separated from it. It is both image and idea forming a unity: it is a monad, without contradiction, much like the photographs at the column. At once the constellation of the red spectre, is given a unity, particularly in the Blancard, where its small, yet whipped, billow releases its wave over the rubble lying beneath it. Photography as allegory suggests a new approach to history, the becoming of a spectrum on the scale of red. This encourages a

certain reappraisal of Commune photography. Now Blancard's photograph can be seen as a monadic constellation under the *metonym* rather than the metaphor of red, as an infinite transposable concept of Communism. This is similar to the manner in which Blanqui sought the redemption of the loss of the Social Republic in cosmology and in the historicism of the eternal return. It is possible that the immanence of the flag's billowing is caught up in a cosmic dynamic of time. Given that history, in an important sense, begins with allegories that Benjamin had noted are to "…pursue the question of whether a connection exists between the secularization of time and space and the allegorical mode of perception" (Benjamin, 2004, p. 472), so does the technology of photography set itself to work contra the formal aesthetics of the 'poetic' metaphor. Metaphor is displaced by a rhetorical concept perhaps put best, if a little awkwardly, as the 'metonymy of allegory'. The metaphor and the metonym are both energised toward the aforesaid allegory (i.e. Blanqui's cosmology of world history), which at root is nothing, but the simple interrelation of the copy and its referent in the analogue of production. Therefore, red flag is not a real symbol, nor an ideological trope, but a universal concept that is discovered analogically in its metonymy. A process of substitution occurs: metaphorical representation by the constructed reality of the copy having a significant impact on how history can be thought in the photographic image.

Examples proliferate in the Braquehais photograph (Fig. 2.7). Delescluze and his compatriots are surrounded by ghostly inscriptions, not only the imperial eagles so beloved of the departed Emperor at the base of the column, but the scenes of battle on the bas–relief entablatures echoing the peculiar arrangement of the engine and its crew. The main figures here would seem to have been part of a larger group milling about when Braquehais tripped the shutter. They appear in trace (rather than ghosts they are the result of 'ghosting' in the long exposure required to register the plate) only as they were moving either asked to leave the frame of the shot or unaware of the photograph being made because busy with other things. A sentry is clearly, if translucently, captured in front of the box to the left; in the distance another figure, a white haired woman sits casually over by some railings.

Braquehais' photograph appears suspended in its own space; it echoes itself by its inability to "return to itself" one of the conditions of allegory. (Cadava, 1997) The space of that moment will have to remain both imminent and immanent – the return eternal insofar as it has never arrived. (Cadava, 1997, p. 31) The Braquehais then cannot be given *to* itself. Instead it becomes increasingly a cast of the glaciation of emergency.

Although the image, we now assume, was/is historical it turns on the allegory, which denies that assimilation. It is instead the disquieting absence of history. Having no metaphorical content apart from the base of the column (a 'bad' allegory within the good) the photograph exists in singularity in the full light of a last moment; the image is not the projection into history, but its negation. It is then, I would stress, *present* in the context of reoccurrence enacted through these photographic excursions in the light of Marx's insistence of the 'farcical' history of Bonarpartism. For Jeffrey Mehlmann, the historical allegory of the fall, is to be "emptied of its dialectical content, history seems without events, that is, barely history…for it is as though the movement of dialectic had been frozen". (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 13)

History is here given to a post-mortem; a slice of time that reveals the entrails of a passing moment. History itself is then haunted by the photograph's allegory, which tells its own story but is soon drawn toward a nexus of meanings about the fate of the participants. There are no theatrical gestures here, nor elegant movements of limbs or looks, just a group posed, poised, over a moment in time now carved into an eternity as if literally shaped or sculpted in the photograph's surface. The Braquehais provides the conditions for a new monumentality: that of the ephemeral become eternal.

> "Barricades made possible…a challenge to the government's legitimacy because they defined a social space in which insurgents, most of whom had never previously met, came together with a powerful sense of common purpose. (…) By offering up an alternative frame of reference in which what had seemed impossible all at once appeared attainable, they helped generate an irresistible sense of exaltation and transcendence." (Traugott, 2010, p. 212)

The Apparatus of the Dispositif:

The upshot for the Commune was that it had crossed a threshold from its festive beginnings – the almost leisurely promise of new Republic – to a time that was slowly closing in. The only way this time could be represented was by events aimed at arresting it, which became increasingly desperate and increasingly destructive. In the Braquehais images made at the Colonne this is sadly apparent; it is that everyone who turns up to be pictured there is assigned their fate (Fig. 2.10) in what was to follow. This image made by Braquehais in Vendôme, shows a group of Fédérés gathering around the engine as if on a day out and accompanied by a single, smartly attired woman.

Now the deed has been done; the *Colonne* toppled and the stump protected by scaffolding. Braquehais' photograph clings to the civil normality of this extraordinary glimpse of the motley officials of resistance. Yet this image – again it is like a frieze cast in light, a death mask – is to posit the photograph as a *dispositif* or 'apparatus', that is the photograph explicitly deposits the indictment of those held in default under the law and such images would be used to prosecute Fédérés after the Commune had been vanquished.

Fig. 2.10. Auguste Bruno Braquehais: *A Group at the base of the Vendôme column*, May1871. Albumen print. Note the centrality of the female figure, who was she? Perhaps a member of one of the food coops or even one of the many women involved in executive work with the Commune? What is certain is that she appears to be important. It may be that the woman is, judged by her small stature, Louise Michel, the 'Red Virgin' and legendary barricade fighter.

Without announcing that photographs are *dispositifs*, as such, even though the photograph shares the function – precisely – of a framework of judgment, Giorgio Agamben discusses the origin of technical apparatuses in the context of structures of religious power. (Agamben, 2009, p. 1) In so doing Agamben more than tacitly, if not exactly putatively, links the photographic plate to the scene of judgement exemplified by such apparatuses. The term *dispositif* occurs most notably in the work of Michel Foucault, anticipated, if not yet explicitly used, in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault,

1978) to describe the emergence of a disciplinary surface that can be used to initiate powerful, seemingly self-evident modes of social control. The *dispositif,* as a condition of capture, both controls and advocates and offers by comparison the opportunity for appraisal and evaluation. It suggests policy and identifies the need for security in policing and diagnosis in medicine, and its emergence coincides with "a given historical moment" that is the moment when the human is distinguished as a being thought of as both model and subject, precisely in the crisis of the symbol which forces a difference between appearance and essence. (Foucault, 1980, p. 195)

What is suggested by applying the dispositif as some general apparatus of surveillance is that its historical evolution is linked to modes of technical-visual production that underpin institutional policy. The emergence of the *dispositif* is bound up with Foucault's terminology of the collective will to power, felt and experienced as an epistemological modification. For a contemporary historian of photography, this terminological shift can be thought of as one of the drivers for the invention of the medium in the wake of Positivism in the early decades of the 19th century. For example, Geoffrey Batchen (Batchen, 1999) believes that photography's specifically French roots have some putative link to the ideology of control in which Foucault's "oxymoron of the 'positive unconscious of knowledge' is soon replaced via Nietzsche, by the phrase, will to power". (Batchen, 1999, p. 190) This would be to imply that photography itself is thus a kind of rationalism, which enters into the network of "circulating forces and economy of relations" as precisely such a *dispositif* involved in the application and reception of power. To extend this positivism of the apparatus as one of the aims and outcomes of the invention of photography would then allude to the screening of the negative to the positive as the introduction of a paradigm of assessment and pathologising the body as a trait, which has been discussed at length by Allan Sekula. (Sekula, 1985, pp. 7-10) For the purposes here it would be to insist that positivism finds its most profound use in the typology reiterating that the surface of the apparatus is wholly fixed around the first instances of objective still image-production reduced to a standard format allowing equally for comparison and analysis. On this basis it would be possible to argue, that in Foucault's work on disciplinary structures the arrival of photography is a crucial aspect. Although not invoked directly in *Discipline and Punish*, photography is used to illustrate the text as noted by Michel de Certeau. (de Certeau, 2006, p. 191) The photographs in the middle of the Penguin edition include one which is of a Panopticon prison.

The place of the subject, represented by the panoptical as the power to situate the body on the physical level, mediates between the body and the identity of its owner. The grid of the apparatus is a machine intended to produce a self-conscious subject. It is also to acknowledge the political situation of the body at the very moment when shifts in the technology of representation are transposed from symbolisation to more allegorical surfaces such as reports, assessments, paper documents and photographs themselves functioning as panoptical apparatus. Not only is this affect particular to photography but also to the way that photography is particular to it. In this sense photography becomes a model of all representations, which now allegorically tell other stories about the place of the body objectively within ideal spaces of observance and control.

The point is that this was by far and away the most developed under the regime of Napoleon III and seen by many of his opponents as the insidious intrusion into the inalienable rights of the citizen under the Republic. Howard Payne has carefully described how the *réseau* or network of surveillance worked. (Payne, 1966) It involved the salon and the boudoir in equal measure in the use of *indicateurs*, paid and sometimes unpaid informers.

> "What we have called the administrative attitude was a crucial contribution to the founding of the Second Empire. At mid century, the directors of the political police displayed a new dynamism of resistance against the kinds of political and social change symbolized by the International 'red specter' of 1848 and by less fearful aspects of increased participation in public life. To a particularistic and conservative bureaucracy, these were intruding abnormalities, which must be overcome on behalf of values better suited to a more static and orderly era. Fear and hope together generated a crusading spirit in the cause of destroying the sources of fear and more definitively reasserting the traditional administrative function." (Payne, 1966, p. 281)

What is at stake here is the question of vision as the locus of paranoid reason of the administration of the Second Empire as preparing the way inadvertently for a "crisis of representation" (Harvey, 2006, p. 97), which explains the insurgency as the inevitable outcome of a movement of history represented in a very different way by Realism in painting. Michael Fried also makes this point, writing about Gustave Courbet – who it should be remembered was an active Communard – in terms of the body itself as a production that stakes out a space of resistance by its own corporeality, recalling the role of the 'body' on the barricade (e.g. Fig. 2.1) insofar as the fundamental content of the barricade is that of flesh and bone. Fried recognises that this situation came about as a result of a crisis of representation originating in the early 19th century from whence,

"the body in question had been shaped and trained and coded by forces at work in French society, including what Foucault describes as the ever more thorough investment of the natural body by techniques of power, a process that appears to have reached a new level of intensity in the 1840's." (Fried, 1990, p. 257) Fried, later in his text, presents an interface between Foucault and Marx centred on the normalisation of the cycle of production and consumption. The vaunted 'real allegory' of Courbet, then opens the space of visualisation to that which normally remains invisible, the autonomy and mystique of power is both stripped away and revealed. Thus it can be averred that the destruction of the Vendôme column sponsored by Courbet, was an entirely rational act of destruction in mockery of the Empire, but with its overt historical intention represented by the planting of the red flag over the ruin. The Column's power was felled into a void – note the 'sound' of the Blancard photograph; the rapping of the flag in the unseasonably cold wind. All around the allegories (fragments) of Empire lie scattered about.

Benjamin grasps this in his reflections on the *Angelus Novus*, the painting by Paul Klee. (Benjamin, 1999, p. 249) The Angel of History is pictured with his face turned towards the past. Where we see a chain of events, the angel sees one single catastrophe piling wreckage upon wreckage at his feet. The metaphor of destruction, the radical recasting of the ruin is for Benjamin the metaphor of history to which he opposes the question of Marx:

> "Must the Marxist understanding of history necessary be acquired at the expense of the perceptibility of history? In what way is it possible to conjoin a heightened graphicness <*Anschaulichkeit*> to the realisation of the Marxist method? The first stage in this undertaking will be to carry over the principle of montage into history." (Benjamin, 2004 p. 461)

What Benjamin is asking is whether or not in the terms of a Marxist history there is an accompanying image of history or is there an allegory of history that inspires an image of Marx? The destruction wreaked by the Commune was an attempt to motivate progress and given that Marx is almost single handedly to define Capitalist modernity, it would seem apposite to suggest that Benjamin's question is to be taken in the context of the mechanically produced image and can be rephrased as; is there a Marxist photography of history? If there is to be such then it will be found in the state of exception, the condition of governance identified by Benjamin in the famous stanza eight of the *Theses Toward a Philosophy of History* where Benjamin announces: "the

state of emergency in which we live is not the exception but the rule." (Benjamin, 1999, p. 248)

The montage idea of Benjamin's (arguably the montage is to replace the overt use of allegory by the modern idea of juxtaposition, of flat plates arranged on a *tabula rasa*) prompted not only the thought that the term itself is applicable to the "revolution of technology" (Cadava, 1997, p. 42) but can also to be applied to the condition of historical consciousness. This would mean that the *mis en scène* of a steady gaze evoked in the Commune photography is consumed as a montage effect, a kind of fragmentation and juxtaposing of the allegory with the actual events depicted. This appears counter intuitive, but montage for Benjamin seems to be describing how mass consciousness and memory is the result of a historical displacement from the symbolic image to the allegorical immanent image.

The allegory of the photograph is also displaced in the rationalisation of photography under the necessities of surveillance; as it is allegorised it is also entered into the maze of the autocracy and reduced to simple identity under the auspices of a sovereign power. This is to harbour two distinct approaches: one is to see the photographs as ontological, as statements about 'things' and proving that they had once come into being, and the second is that they came into being at a particular time and place – that they represent an illustration of historical events, are ways of memorialising either an inventory of objects or a sequence of events. The mechanically reproduced image is neither really immediate nor properly historical; it provokes a major question in the field of the historical object, as any object can now become historical and/or archaeological. The distinction remains in terms of interpretation. For the very bearing on the positivity of the analogue – arguably the analogue is from the 'theological' origins of the apparatus (Agamben, 2009 p. 3) – is to announce the assertion of Foucault that, for example, the reform of the legal–medical system whilst concerned to accomplish "a closer mapping of the social body," (Sheridan, 1980 p. 144) was also to introduce a new method of assaying the information received. Information was now subject to the policy of a system involved in statistical data, a *montage* in terms of Benjamin's question of Marx. This supports the introduction of aggregate combinations of 'information' that are construed around an ideology of the social body, which then refers to a purely objective dispositif of camera surveillance. Now rationalism finds its role by way of an image component through which to work by means of control and example. The idea of the model instead becomes involved in the comparison of types themselves now arrayed on

the surface of the apparatus. This surveillance, which the Commune sought to rid from the Republic after the years of police spies and draconian press laws was in effect to deny technology which was already seen as an insidious aspect of the Napoleonic dictatorship.

In the *dispositif* there inheres a secret complicity between the police and photography (again the 'natural' excess of information offered by analogue technology). After all, the photograph as it emerges at this time is to provide precisely the kind of detail needed to instil discipline and provide evidence, "'Discipline,' says Foucault 'is a political anatomy of detail.'" (Sheridan, 1980, p. 149) The very lack of teleological direction in photography as a compelling historical truth beyond the bourgeois recognition of their likeness reflected in it, takes up the possibility that it makes for an instrumental impression of the *mis en scène* and reiterates it rather than replacing it with an alternate 'higher' or poetic viewing platform. Indeed if montage can be taken in allegorical terms from Benjamin, it would be to fold back upon another stage upon which actions occur. Photography – and nowhere is this more the case than in those Commune images in the Vendôme – appears to ground events in their immanence to place and time. History itself is only later constituted in the photographic analogue and its *logos*, the historical metaphor. The screen exists in a movement of another kind of allegory, not one of a resurgent nature already prepared for human perception, but precisely one that is perceived by human consciousness only and insofar as it arrives preformed as a radically exterior inscription *because* mechanically recorded in the camera.

As if intuitive of this fact, the authorities, immediately after the Commune had fallen, restored 'Article 22 of the Decree of April 17' (suspended like all 'repressive' bourgeois laws during the uprising) authorising the pre-examination of all photographic images for distribution or publishing. By December that year, L'Admirault, the Military Governor of Paris had differentiated between photographs of Communards and the photographs of ruins. (English, 1984) Photographs of ruins, for commercial and political reasons were de-sensitised and allowed to circuit. By November of 1872 this was gradually enforced on all photographs of the Commune: all images for publication or distribution, except the ruins, were subject to pre-examination. Of particular vexation to the authorities were the photographs of dead Communards (images banned) and those Communards executed for their roles in the uprising (images circulated). Most notable of these latter, is the case of Théophile Ferré one of the leading ideologues of Commune. His image,

bearded, sallow and intense was allowed to circulate. For the first time the portrait image brought "the criminal's face into identity with their crime". (English, 1984, p. 18)

Photography and the State of Exception:

Giorgio Agamben points out that the État de Siège had been introduced under Emperor Napoleon I in 1812 and was used not simply to signal emergencies for internal security, but to define the mode of policymaking *tout court* throughout the Second Empire. (Agamben, 2003) Several times Bonaparte's nephew and now Emperor, Napoleon III, instituted states of emergency in the lead up to the war of 1870–71. "The Franco–Prussian War and the insurrection of the Commune coincided with an unprecedented generalization of the state of exception, which was proclaimed in forty departments and lasted in some of them until 1876." (Agamben, 2003, p. 12)

The state of exception is the imposition of a state of emergency whereby the law is suspended so that it may be applied by full force. It is not surprising that frequent use of such instruments were made by Haussmann in the appropriation of *Quartiers* for destruction to raise capital for the work. *Dégagement* itself, the practice of removal of obstructions which Haussmann's officers (Bergdoll, 1994) had in all probability borrowed the term from their photographers who used it to describe the process of painting out awkward intrusions on their negatives. Crucially this would seem to offer some putative link between the exception and photography as representing the two sides of the *dispositif*.

The legal principle of the state of exception, (in the 20th century used explicitly in times of war by the various War Measures Acts, or Emergency Powers) is that by suspending the rule of law is to enable the law 'in itself' to be enacted. This suspended law can then be used in response to an assessment gleaned from surveillance or intelligence with regard to an emergency. The state of exception then is the condition of the law applied in full – with violence if necessary – on the rationale that (to paraphrase Agamben) "to protect the rule of law, then the law itself must be suspended". (Agamben, 2003, pp. 1–3) Thus the exception becomes the legal paradox of the application of law in its suspension. Does this not then share some kind of common space with the apparatus?

The state of exception in photography seems attached to the medium's ability to replicate and repeat the future-past, as previously discussed. It is to put into effect a taking stock of an inventory of things gathered at a certain moment. In the German language (it is under German law that the theory of the state of exception – hence

Benjamin's citation above – has been most fully developed) the term *aufnahmen* is here to mean 'taking' in the sense of taking a photograph and bears an aetiological (causal) relation to the term *ausnahme* meaning 'exception' insofar as exception is to imply a 'taking' from a norm. Thus the *aufnahmen* and the *ausnahme* are linked to one another by a word combination, *Ausnahmezustand*.

The similarity between the two terms could produce a phrase 'taking of the exception', implying that the state of exception could be considered a *visually contingent* assessment of a situation, requiring agency (backed by the need for urgency) that Agamben himself gives as 'exigency' (Agamben, 2007, p. 25). Thus to give the correct terminology might be to create the phrase relating to photography in terms of legality, a 'state of exigency' – or to consider a term used by Howard Caygill, a state of 'contingency'. This terminology is applied to photography in the reading of Benjamin's understanding of experience. (Caygill, 1998) Contingency is the irrational, the unforeseen and has an image action in photography as it is the agency which for Benjamin, is the "tiny spark of accident, the here and now" he identifies in his essay, 'A Short History of Photography' (Benjamin, 1980, p. 202) which brings a cause of exteriority, in something other than itself – in this instance an image of the poet Dauthendey's wife whose gaze anticipates her future suicide – and precisely that fatal chance which 'political' technology has sought to circumvent. "Instead of transforming experience by making it contingent and open to future interpretation, technology may serve to monumentalise it…" (Caygill, 1998, p. 95) Which, in this sense, would be the process of *dégagement* in the manner of the retouch is to blank or freeze the possibility of chance, or, in the sense intended by Caygill, to foreclose contingency. This would be another way of describing the state of exception by means of the censorship and control of images.

Arguably it could be put that Caygill's concept of contingency forms a limit point; it prevents the photograph from being fully assimilated to the exception and keeps open the dialectic of experience and interpretation as still possible for a subject. The point may be that the allegory of the photograph is precisely contingency (i.e. Benjamin's spark is the action of the analogue itself) and that in this context of the *Ausnahmezustand* would be counter to it and form the basis for an aesthetics of resistance.

Agamben's text (Agamben, 2003, p. 53) whilst not going so far as to use the word contingency, does however resolve the internal paradox of the exception in the

indeterminate again a term nuanced by the contingent representing a slippage from contingency as such. Benjamin's writing in the Convolute 'N' would be, admittedly to express it rather paradoxically, to be the palimpsest deferred in the metaphor of the photographic machine. In the flash, the image of the law is essentially revealed as allegorical, that of the exception given expression by Benjamin in Baudelaire's metaphor of the 'veil' which shares the character of the camera's focusing screen. Essentially the veil is a two-way screen from inside of which you can see out, but from outside you cannot see in.

Another application of the veiling of metaphor is with Mehlmann's complex reading of exception in the novels of Victor Hugo and can be thought as contiguous with the writing apparatus of the novel as a machine, powered by metaphoricity itself, "the degree zero of polysemy, the fundamentally *heterogenising* movement of dissemination." (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 22) As it is, the writing machine "break(s) with the registers of specularity and representation", so it is that Agamben's *dispositif* apparatus provides the space for the 'writing machine' the very 'metaphorisation' of metaphor. Mehlmann draws the machine – again the allegory of the metaphor – as a tempo and ringing of the tocsin, Hugo's warning bell in the rat infested den of thieves – the *argot*, the criminal underworld extending (for Mehlmann) "from term to term" (a tempo, a beating of the drum) the process of metaphorisation at work in Hugo's text. In the sense that this is applied in Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris* in the "fascinating and anarchical abjection" of the Cour des Miracles, "Hugo's medieval underworld" by which he introduces into the novel a "theory of outlaws". (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 76)

The writing machine is ultimately to negate the onto-theological monument of the Cathedral. The novel, which is but a whole concatenation of secular 'zones' replaces the cathedral: vertical, hierarchical representation is contrasted with a horizontal, 'anarchical' counterpart. (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 86) It is not unreasonable to think that the photographs of the barricades similarly metaphorised the *real* barricades. The barricades were never intended to be real as they sought to symbolise the univocity of resistance in the same way that the National Guard turned their backs on the passing Prussians.

The state of exception is to counter criminal lawlessness with state lawlessness. In the threat, which the sovereign must decisively act to forestall, the exception is the suspension of laws in order to safeguard the application of those laws. Thus in the state of exception the law is applied in its essence as absolute law. In the question of the

argon, the outlaw's den, then the exception is the rule; no law governs this site as it is permanently in an abject sub-human state of miscreancy, but by the suspension of law so the *argon* is itself in exception and can in most instances be left to self–regulate. It is only when the threat posed by the outlaws via a threat to the existing orders that an image sign allegory begins to circulate as a phantasmic image in the form of the monstrous hunchback for instance. The reason for this citing via Mehlmann to Victor Hugo, is this: it is to suggest that the Commune was tagged as a space of anomie and given the guise of the outlaw thus permitting a state of exception to be installed when on the seventeenth of May, Thiers gave the orders to crush the Commune and "give no quarter". (Horne, 2007, p. 377)

Photography, as it enters the bleached out anomic space of the Commune is, at that moment, itself also in a state of exception, as they are illegal documents that would be to counter the entire apparatus of control delimited by photography. For in the apparatus – just as the cathedral is 'given' by its photographic reproduction – so the *dispositif* as an apparatus of capture is to extend the exception by a network or *réseau*. (Agamben, 2009, p. 8) The apparatus is then – in *extensio* – the State itself as defined in a technical-legal image overrides the mythic origin of classical space, to become by *coincidence*, the apparatus determining a Republic of representations. In this sense, the State is thus not to be confused with the Republic which is merely part of the State as an operational system.

The State cloaked the city in a new set of laws and instruments which determine a code of representation sanctioned by law, hence the potential legal value of the Braquehais images in the Vendome. Photography – and this is the genius of the late photography of the Second Empire intimated above – invents surveillance by the State but not specifically the Republic. Photography, which quickly puts the *dispositif* into the very *logos* of the State, is not an imposition actually requiring, *de rigeur* of a state of exception for itself, but rather, is borne out of the attributes of the photo-graphic as they apply to the bio-political administration of the State. The Commune was one of those rare historical instances that make for a shift in the bio-political uses of surveillance. The governance of a population is rationalised to the level that surveillance on the Panopticon model, the gaze is sovereign, but the king is dead. This is to arrive at a limit point in the bio-political which is most often associated with the late work of Michel Foucault in his understanding of 'governmentality'. (Gordon, 1991, 8–12) It posits the complicity of photography in this paradigm – nothing new in the theoretical discussions

of the medium – but when nuanced here in the Commune pertains to some reason of originality. Here is suggested the criminal allegory of governance, the standardisation of administration in the general condition of criminality applied to the population as a whole but ameliorated by the allegory of the story of crime given full vent in the broadsheets published after the Commune. The image of photography now becomes involved in the identification of typologies and this changes the scope and style of the medium's context and content; it is the beginning of the *persuasive* image, that image which functions in the becoming presence of the spectacle. Precisely this is the upshot of Commune photography and arguably the achievement of the Commune *in* history: the perfection of a bio-political form of urban administration based on 'welfare'. As Mehlmann suggests, (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 125) the assurance offered by "a highly visible (voyant) restricted economy of delinquents, of cops and robbers," can be fictionalised within the general economy of illegality attesting "in full specularity" to the interdependence of the police and the criminal.

The Death Allegory of Photography:

The Commune, although *de facto* a 'state of exception' – because of its separation and the building of the barricades, was only declared *de jure* a state of exception on the order that 'no quarter' be given issued by Thiers on 18th May 1871. Thiers backed by Generals Boulanger and Macmahon was eager to exorcise the humiliations of the military defeat by Prussia. This released pent up fury and energy into the bloody denouement. Thiers himself is crowned as the sovereign President of the Third Republic, (the first of many) over what in the end would amount to over 30,000 Communard dead. Now the exception is waged as a war against the Commune and like the proletarian mob in Hugo's *Notre Dame de Paris*, the Communards are enclosed by their own defences behind which they can only wait for the inevitable having "failed to attain their object and finding *themselves* appearing as grotesque duplications or metaphors of the surface". (Mehlmann, 1977, p. 87) The surface is no longer the architectural metaphor which offers sanctuary even succour and which subtends to the space of history, but a cruel surveillance of the decision against those who are pinpointed by their place in front of it.

The key to the photographic allegory of the Commune barricades is that of the illegality of resistance in defiance of the *polis*. In terms of the photographs eventually brought to light, these are exemplary for their civility and their honesty; they would have been

useful to the Commune if there were a public function for which they could be applied. However, precisely and insofar as the former civil form was never allowed to play a role, the 'bestial' actions of the Communards were used to condemn them. The Commune as a civil population was included in the exception such that Thiers and his forces could then obliterate it with impunity. The state of exception crosses the boundary from the legal and the civil into the biological for the sake of the effrontery to human decency from which the exception was intended to protect bourgeois gentility. What happens in this process is that the state of exception intervenes more profoundly in what Agamben calls the 'anthropological machine' and – similar to the way Benjamin puts it – the Sovereign is thus linked to the *art* of creation, or to put it in context with a phrase of Haussmann's, in this instance 'creative destruction'. Bizarrely and terribly, this was carried out on a basis of 'natural' selection; Horne reports how General Gallifret conducted this:

> "The basis of Gallifret's selection was apparently simplicity itself; men with grey hair were ordered to step forward, on the assumption that they must also have fought on the barricades of '48; those with watches were picked out as probable 'officials' of the Commune; while the balance was made up of unfortunates suffering from outstanding ugliness or coarseness of feature. Needles to say any Communard found to be a former member of the regular army was automatically shot." (Horne, 2007, p. 407)

Samuel Weber also and similarly paraphrases the words of Carl Schmitt, that, as much as the 18th century witnessed the sovereignty of transcendence, so the "the nineteenth century was increasingly governed by representations of immanence." (Weber, 1992, p. 11) Now the decision on the exception is one given to immanent representation, insofar as the inhuman is *in* the human and can be recognised in the previous example of Hugo's invention of the hunchback. In a crucial sense this helps to explain the preponderance of ideal classical images masking social hypocrisy in the Second Empire. Thus these symbols were the ones attacked by the Communard. The state of exception then has a critical aesthetic dimension based on the contrast of the 'classical' models of representation and the unruly disrespectful anarchic emblems of the Commune borne out by the flying of the red flag and the destruction of symbolic buildings such as the Colonne of Vendome and even at Theirs' own villa, sacked shortly after. The actions of the Communard then were seen to be defacing the symbols of the Empire and represented the unacceptable crisis of representation, which had threatened to explode

during the whole duration of the Republic. The state of exception then was the instrument of law used to demonise the Commune in its appearance of anomie.

In the most extreme sense of the exception the sovereign decision was to decide on the fate of those captured within it by a judgment deeming them to be ugly of appearance and sub-human by temperament. *Pace* Benjamin: the *Ancien Regime* intent on saving art and beauty and insisting on the "unity of the material and transcendental object […] the paradox of the theological symbol… the (divine) relationship between appearance and essence" (Benjamin, 2003, p. 160) and the modern secular allegory, decisively tearing appearance from essence to reveal essence as displaced by ironic and profane emblems.

The Commune whilst it may have appeared as 'romantic' to even think the possibility of the social republic was, in fact anything but. It was the courageous tearing down of the fantasy of transcendence, the entire notion of the Empire was ground to dust and it was a dust whose eddies would continue to cloud the Third Republic. However, there was a price for this triumph: it had become the task of the exception to 'expiate' the *visibility* of the red spectre from the Republic.

Epilogue:

Haussmann's vision had been reversed by the emergency of the Commune. The technique of *dégagement* turned against itself in the reappearance of the barricade. Now the quasi-medieval emergence of earthworks in the barricades had clashed menacingly with the neo-Baroque facades of the central arrondissements. The bourgeoisie lived in fear of the Red Specter.

The barricade thus refutes Haussmann's work and reveals it as a style that is devoid of real, in the sense of social-historical emblems. Instead what has happened in Haussmann was a simulation of style, the assertion of the faux-classical origin of the bourgeoisie elevated to identification with the Emperor himself. It was to be but the first of many examples of architectural totalitarianism. The Commune had represented a brave if foolhardy resistance to this inevitability and the barricade had become the urban space adapted to these emergency conditions. The Communard is not without a sense of history (and irony) as the barricade is intimately bound up with the illusory space of the Republic, which was though ineffective militarily, an important signifier of resistance. The Commune thus presents a new space of experience, no longer based simply on the bourgeoisie but now transposed across different socio–economic groups of workers to

include photographers in the unfamiliar territory of being unable to supply their stock-in-trade representations. The task that seems to have been undertaken by most of the photographers who survived the Commune (it is highly likely that some of the anonymous photographers perished in the expiations) was the collecting of images that explicitly showed the courageous and inventive work put into the barricades as a form of urban defense. In this sense, Blancard's photographs seek, without question, to deny these kinds of representations of the Commune and restore to the ruins the 'dignity' of the Empire.

Blancard is the most exemplary case of a challenge to Commune photography. The 'Bonapartist', as it were, strikes back in the image economy that followed the terrible weeks of May. He was aided by the fact that Article 22 excluded images of ruins from censorship, which effectively brought the photographers of the Second Empire, such as Marville, from their exile and images of ruins, particularly the Hôtel de Ville became popular souvenirs.

Now Barronet reprints Blancard's work; it gains in its significance, not least in the spy shot of the preparations for *la chute* and the flickering of the flag in the Vendôme, but also in the many photographs Blancard made of the ruins particularly a series of haunting, as well as nakedly propagandist images showing the results of the Communard destruction of the Tuilieries Palace (Figs. 2.11 and 2.12). Blancard's work was more rhetorical than allegorical. Braquehais' intimate figures of the Vendôme on the other hand elevate the allegory to the level of tragedy. This was evinced in the 'bad' presence of the column stump, which was allowed to remain as a sign of destruction and also to provide a point of congregation. Unwittingly the fact that the stump remained also proved the *de facto* and *de jure* evidence of the destruction and, furthermore, made the rebuilding of the column much more of a formality. For Blancard there was only one allegory, only one possible trace, and that was proscribed in the loss of the Second Empire itself, whose ruins are depicted in a state of grace.

When David Pinckney, writing of Haussmann, argues that the "transformation of the city of Paris within two short decades would not have been accomplished in a state less authoritarian than Second Republic" (Pinckney, 1958, p. 8) he could also have added photography to that equation. In a state as authoritarian as the Second Republic photography was adopted precisely because it provided images that the state itself recognised as different to the all the preceding images, not in terms of popular images but in terms of political documents dedicated to the service of the Emperor. The

Commune marked the apotheosis of this whole idea of the identification of Empire and the images of the barricades reveal for the first time in France a properly photographic representation of The People. Arguably this image of a society in rebellion is counter to the whole ethos of the Republic as essentially a bourgeois one.

Fig. 2.11. Hippolyte Blancard: *L'Intérieur des Tuilieries incendiées, le 23 mai*. Digital print by Jean Baronnet, 2006, 20 x 17 cm from the original stereograph.
It should be kept in mind here that Blancard's photographs were intended as stereographs. They would have been printed to the contacts of two adjacent negatives and sold as a card with two identical images side by side. The viewer would have required another apparatus, a viewer that brought the two images together to make a single three dimensional representation, thus adding a piece of technical novelty to the images. Baronnet's reprinting takes the scale of the images much larger and show that they are very impressive photographs without the novelty of the stereograph.

Photography becomes involved in phenomenological appearance, but as far as the truth of history is concerned, it is to find that essence was to remain mute and still the province of Empire. Consequently, photography even in the image of the barricade did not forge a critique of representation amongst the proletariat. The impact of Second Empire photography was always stronger on the bourgeois insofar as they knew how to

use the photographic image through their own class interests. Manifestly, Blancard's images of the ruins are calibrated to the intelligent consumer by way of their referencing the sublime quality of the Fall.

Fig. 2.12. Hippolyte Blancard: *Tuilieries, salle des Généraux*.
Digital print by Jean Baronnet, 2006, 20 x 17 cm from the original stereograph.

Moreover, in the eyes of the *petit bourgeois*, photography had confirmed the worldview of a narrow empiricism of facts and figures and the propaganda 'montages', for instance those of Appelt showing the executions of Communard leaders were eagerly purchased for their 'truth' to the facts even though they were mere simulations. (English, 1984, p. 46) It is not that every human being has visual recollections at their disposal with which to reference their subjectivity, rather it is to suggest that the appearance of photography appears to concur with the idea that subjective memory itself takes the form of a pictorial ideology.

It would seem to be a reasonable assumption that, at the very turning point of experience in terms of ideology, is found the site *par excellence* of Jeffrey Mehlmann's historical account of the subject of writing. This also coincides with, or even precipitates, a shift in the perception of finitude, of death as owing much more to

contingency and for which the expression of state in the monument is no longer the final epitaph evinced in the grim photographs made in Pere Lachaise by Disdéri following the slaughter of the Mur des Fédérés of the 28th May (Fig. 2.13).

Fig. 2.13. Attributed to Disdéri: *Communard Dead at Pere Lachaise, 23 May 1871*
Note the clothing; in others of Disdéri's photographs the figures are naked, these mostly young people, including one woman on the lower right holding a wreath, have obviously been hurriedly placed in their coffins.

The state of exception in the most extreme political form is the suspension of law amounting to the seizing of authority by authority in the sense of an objectifying vision or *Aufnahmen*. This is the empty space (of photography) in which unilateral declarations of sovereignty might open the way for radically autonomous political forms of expression of which the Commune was to be but the advanced guard. Thus the Communards were trapped in the vacuum of their own state of exception and they were eliminated from the possibility of time and space.

Summary:
Photography then accomplishes two things as historicity; one, it heightens public consciousness amongst a constituency of specific interpretation as immanent to the event of its causation, and two; it provides a model of self-consciousness that constantly recalls and recollects by reference to an image made from the *dispositif* as an objective

apparatus coinciding with the production of a memory by visual means. Photography, as witness to the destruction of the *Colonne*, supplements the memory of those who never witnessed it. In this supplementary role, photography's imprint regains the allegory for memory, the conclusion that Mehlmann could easily have arrived at if photography had been more central to his thesis. If the great history paintings of David and later, Manet are now in effect made redundant, not as great art but as historical reportage, by photography it is because the uses of photography, its very neutrality, are to make it a more 'external' form of perception memory. The allegory of history is paradoxically challenged by the immediate political action of photography, which despite its neutrality reveals the persuasion of the photographer as a political subject. The spaces of history in Braquehais' pictures in Vendome are documents of fact, but despite this give a very clear moral message about the citizens caught up in the disaster that was to befall them. There is no exhortation or plea; the image itself is absorbed, but in the civil context, in theatrical terms. This convocation is not intended to contradict Michael Fried's reading of Diderot (Fried, 1980, p. 31 and p. 61) and nor to diminish Fried's complex argument concerning the gaze to the condition of photography (Fried 1990, p. 45), rather it is to say that (and Braquehais and Commune photography in general is a good example here) the outcome for aesthetics is to affect a reopening of the context *between* the theatrical and the absorbed. Photography compounds the event in its very neutrality as there is no exhortation to action – that is it remains absorbed in its own moment, but yet at the same time is also theatrical insofar as it is a social event to stand for the camera, whose very unnaturalness projects to a moment of posterity in the now that may indeed teeter on the edge of the absurd or camp.

The monument exists as a setting into which this event of history has already been marked; it is as already a *dispositif*, a frame of assessment and the site of a judgment *apriori* of the camera's presence evinced in the impassive gaze. Power alone would no longer be able to claim the Republic outright, indeed it was the structure of power itself that had been shaken to its foundations.

CHAPTER 3

Atget and the Topology of Resistance and Poverty (Zoniers)

Introduction:

When Molly Nesbit published her carefully researched account of Eugène Atget, *Atget's Seven Albums*, (Nesbit, 1992), it marked a turning point in the understanding of the photographer. It became clear by her research that up to that point, Atget had been misunderstood. Nesbit unearthed the fact that in the photography of the Third Republic, it is Atget who reverses the decline of the medium by bringing to it a renewed structure of purpose based on documentary practice. Nesbit's work was to challenge ideas about the history of photography in France and also in the United States, from where most of the misapprehensions about Atget stemmed. (Szarkowski and Morris Hambourg, 1983; Krauss, 1987) The study of Atget could now be relocated from the context of aesthetic and pictorial photography to topographical photography (or photography in the service of the survey) and in the specific context of Paris and its environs, the location in which Atget worked during a career spanning some 40 years.

With hindsight, it can be seen how Eugène Atget (1857–1927) not only revitalised French photography in the censorship-ridden Third Republic, but also how he exemplifies the medium's capacity for the topographical description of the history of Paris. It is important to remember that architectural and topographical photography had gone into something of a decline after the market crash of 1867 and the subsequent tribulations involved with the collapse of the Second Empire in 1870. The post–Commune years saw photography descend into aesthetic mannerism at the service of commercial studio photography and the right wing populist press. (English, 1986, p. 13) Molly Nesbit, whose text on Atget is remarkable for its breadth of reference and unequalled contextual understanding, still stands head and shoulders above all other monographs on Atget of which there have been a number mostly based around "Atget's Paris" such as Andreas Krase's recent selection for Taschen (Krase, 2006) and more importantly the exhibition and catalogue, *Atget; Une Retrospective*, convened at the Bibliothèque Nationale in 2008 by Sylvie Aubenas and Gillaume Gil (Aubenas and Gil, 2008). Despite the excellence of this latter work, Nesbit's text remains key insofar as it

allows for the development of concepts read through Atget rather than about him, to a wider context of understanding of documentary photography but "not as great art" (Edwards, 1993, p. 87) and this is why Nesbit's text remains the key reference here. It allows for theoretical development by a process of hermeneutics and the possibility of lineaments free from historical reason and open to critical reception in whatever contemporary context they can be seen in.

The photographs of the Zoniers present an image of place subject to the contingent and the irrational, the result of social and political partitioning which, although there before Haussmann, became exacerbated after he had reformed the city in the 1850's and 60's. The Zoniers* were Atget's investigation of a *topos* associated in the eyes of the authorities with squalid conditions, illegal activity and deprivation. It may be true that Atget did not make great photography in the Zoniers (with one outstanding exception) but he did follow a certain set of criteria that took into account the need for social regulation by systems of measurement that underlay the visual topography of the site.

This chapter, therefore, is not to rehearse Nesbit's work, but rather to look for the spaces in it where conceptual strategies are suggested by her but not followed through. There are many omissions in Nesbit owing to the context in which she herself was working, such as for instance the importance of analogue technology as a supersession of the commodity form, which she does not reference. Perhaps this had been somewhat occluded by the necessity of the time to apply models to Atget based on art current to the time of writing. The aim here is to concentrate more thoroughly on the sets of photographs, shown for the first time and in full by Nesbit's skilful cataloguing, that Atget inserted into albums from around 1913 which one day he had hoped to publish commercially. Thus the albums were intended as prototypes for a serious attempt to build a market share of the photographic industry. When it became clear this publishing would not be forthcoming in the outbreak of the First World War, Atget duly offered all seven of them to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.

Molly Nesbit's triumph was to 'return' Atget to Paris at a critical moment in the history of the Third Republic of France. At the time of his first appearance as a significant photographer, France was in the grip of the fallout of the Dreyfus Affair. It is not known

* 'Zoniers' was the name given to the region or tract of land that lay outside of the city of Paris but was not yet considered as countryside. The term is a military one relating to the glacis, the smoothed over ground that surrounded the fortifications proper.

whether the false accusation of Captain Dreyfus, a Jew and respected officer – that he was a German spy – had any bearing on Atget's decision to turn his back on the theatre, where he spent many years in repertory and commit to professional photography. Certainly Atget's chosen subject may have been given an impetus by the scandal in as much as he collected a large dossier on the affair, which he also sold to the Bibliothèque Nationale. It is of note that Atget too, in respect of Dreyfus, was an army man having spent six years in service and where he learnt to survey and photograph landscape topography. (Aubenas and Gil, 2006, p. 281) Certainly his reaction to Dreyfus, who received a full pardon in 1906, having spent the previous five years on Devil's Island, was a turning point in his regard of the Republic. For many, not just Atget, the *Affaire Dreyfus* revealed that despite its ostensible Socialist political make-up, the Republic was still in the thrall of the military and royalist establishment. Atget was no establishment man; his politics, though never publicly declared, were almost certainly of the *Syndicaliste* and revolutionary left. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 193)

Atget had a notice above his studio door, which read: *'Documents pour l'Artiste'* and it spoke of an attitude to his chosen profession. Here, if you were an Artist, Architect or Designer, you would find documents that may inform your work or provide an *aide memoire* of types of objects, places and occasionally people, found in the areas of Paris once treasured by the 'amateurs' (those scholars of Old Paris, the very first of Atget's clients) especially the less well-known or forgotten parts of the city. As for *Les Beaux Art*s, Atget's notice seemed to declare: *'mon ami'*, that's your affair. In his own terms Atget insisted he was a maker of documents rather than an artist of photography, even though after 1909 he had changed his status for tax purposes to *Auteur/Editeur* from the earlier one of *Artiste Dramatique*. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 88)

The Zoniers Album:

In February 2012, I was able to view the album which Atget entitled *Zoniers*, the penultimate of the seven albums in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. I hoped that the structure of the album would bear out a theory that Atget's sequence contained a 'geographical' methodology. I had not gone to the library's archive to view exceptionally good photographs as many of the images are dull on their own. It is only when they are experienced in the album, one after the other and page after page, or on the pages of Nesbit's catalogue where they can be seen in groups of four, or eight when opened to two pages (Nesbit, 1992, ps. 398–412), that they begin to do their work as a

typology, which I will argue is also a *topology*. I was very interested to see how the album read as an exploration of a historically determined politics of space and that what the logic of the sequence might be in terms of the work's grid of reference, which immediately led to the idea of a geographically mapped space given by coordinates reflected in the selection of photographs. I had become convinced that Atget, as much as a photographer, was a 'photo-topologist', a space explorer of the underbelly of the Paris *polis* whose work by its careful attention to topographic details also revealed the *topos* that underlay such details. I was also convinced that this was the blind-spot in Molly Nesbit's research, that she had overlooked somewhat the geographical Atget. The methodology used by Nesbit was, it seemed to me, less comfortable in the issues of space or 'spatial production' and all that meant in terms of geographical meanings, even those reflecting a certain tradition of topographical geography.

Of the sixty images that Atget edited into the album, it is possible to subdivide the whole by location into arrondissement and by named place and then type of Zoniers. The album is a journey through an inhospitable and at times grim set of places ameliorated on occasion by some droll camera-work and group portraits of the inhabitants as if they were performers in a travelling theatre – something not unknown to Atget who had been an actor as a younger man.

The first thing to note is that all of the photographs in the album were made in arrondissements in the southeast, east and the northwest of the city. This suggests that by the time Atget begins to photograph there, all the temporary camps on the west and southwest sides of Paris have disappeared. In the regions that remain under occupancy in the Zoniers, the compounds and camps are generally set close by the *Portes*, the gates to the city proper. By making up entire areas of camps and yards, the Zoniers had become an unwelcoming environment and appeared to be encroaching on the Haussmannised arrondissements when in fact the reverse was true: the Zoniers were being threatened by inner city expansion of *embourgeoisement* backed up by "the unassuaged supervision" of the Prefecture. (Savitch, 1989, p. 99) These desolate and rough areas had for many years been the habitat of a people, the Chiffonier, the rag picking community of Paris, those legendary teams of illegal waste collectors that thrived on the valuable pieces of silk salvaged from the fashion houses, which they processed and sold back to the clothing industry. Fig. 3.1 shows quite clearly the preponderance of Chiffonier camps in the zones as well as the concentration of such camps in the thirteenth arrondissement, in and around the Portes, d'Italie and Ivry.

Boulevard Masséna traversed this region, which at the time was one of the most notorious areas of illegal settlement consisting almost entirely of ragpicker camps and some of the largest recycling yards.

Fig. 3.1. Sketch map showing the positions of the Chiffonier camps photographed by Atget.

Numerals in white:

1.	Montreuil	8. Gobelins
2.	Dorée	9. Mouchez
3.	Ivry	10. Peupliers
4.	Masséna	11. Asnières
5.	Choisy	12. Trébert
6.	Italie	13. Valmy
7.	Butte Aux Cailles	

Note: The numerical list is simply based on a north to south axis around the belt. It is not intended to show definitively that this was the route Atget took, but the concentration of the number of sites clusters do arise that may suggest particular routes.

Throughout the album and despite the rationale of the grid, it is possible to detect a mapping curvature to accompany Atget's selections, which suggests strongly that he did make use of maps. The map would be invaluable in planning the routes to encounter the

camps and the Prefecture in the Hôtel de Ville could have easily supplied one. As a whole, the album bears this out: groups of images shown together form discreet sets of topographies. These clusters represent positions within the whole of the album. I have introduced three terms that it may be useful to explicate as these terms are also applicable to the general descriptions of space and photography alluded to earlier in the study.

The first term is topography, which is the general horizon of experienced three dimensional spaces. Topography can also mean the detailed representation of this space, usually a specific and limited area, by a means of surveying such as sketching, drawing, mapping and photographing. Topography is most often associated with the mapping of territory and the aesthetics of landscape art. Topology is a synonym of topography, but is more associated with bounded spaces, or specific examples of space. In the context here, I am referring to it as the focusing in on the topography to identify a specific site. The topology then is the close analysis of a site subject to various other modes of testing, including isomorphic distortion to which it can be subjected without surrendering its original form. Topology also has a contextual meaning, the doubling and multiplying of analogies, insofar as mathematical topologies are complexities of figures made up of double or multi-sided surfaces. In general terms, topology is the surface *presenting* of topography.

Typology, which is to be distinguished from topology, had become a method of comparison in the natural sciences, and is one of the key operations in the theory of photography's *tabula rasa*, its ability to display a table of elements. (Batchen, 1999, p. 58) It is difficult to separate modern typology from photography in this sense. Photography becomes the delineator for the visual comparison of a set or a group of comparable types, and of increasing interest to nineteenth century social scientists and criminologists who were now given the opportunity for the objective judgment of appearance in the distinguishing of shared features or attributes. In Atget, the typology is represented by the clusters of images used in the seven albums he worked on from around 1905 to the outbreak of the First World War. Such documenters transcended the sum of their parts; a single image was then of less interest than a whole phalanx of images as these were objectively suitable for the archive. The typology, though never conclusive, established unities that can be mapped across manifold purposes and systems of display and are thus involved with conceptual categories. The tabular grid arrangement became the most informational mode used to display such typologies in

photography and enabled broad and far reaching judgements based on the identification of differences.

It is the case that Atget's influence on future photographers, such as Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographs of industrial architecture, sees the typology taken to a limit point of expression; the formation of conceptual totalities where similar differences are arrayed and accounted, and perhaps – although this can only be intimated here – Molly Nesbit's display of the Atget albums in total, as groups of photographs on single pages in her book, was intended to reference. In so doing, one suspects that she subtly infers a very important contribution to the understanding, not only of Atget's true worth as a photographer, but also the fundamental concept of photography as the naming process of a typology somewhat opposed to a subjective pictorial view of the photographer's work.

1 Porte d'Ivry – Zoniers (13ᵉ arr) 2 Porte d'Ivry – Zoniers – (14ᵉ arr) (1912)
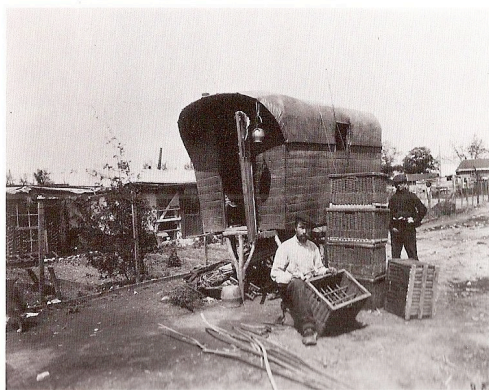
3 Porte d'Ivry, Zoniers, 1912 (13ᵉ arr) 4 Porte d'Ivry, Zoniers – 1912 (13ᵉ arr)

Fig.3.2. Eugène Atget: *Zoniers* (page 398 in Nesbit)

I have chosen to follow Molly Nesbit's style of display for the reasons set out above. These are the first four plates of the album in a group of four all of them made at Porte d'Ivry. They are all habitations and entitled by hand in pencil in the album, 'Porte d'Ivry – Zoniers (13th arr.)' with variation in this format on page one and two. Top row from left to right: a semi–permanent tent like structure with a chiffonier seated in front of it. His wagon tilted up to the left. Top right: a small accommodation wagon (note the washing line in the background). Lower left: the third plate in the album shows a chiffonier renovating bottle crates demonstrating that the recycling of silk and textile was not the only economic activity carried out in the camps. Lower right: a wide-angle view of the corner of a chiffonier camp showing the gate to the left, two wagons and a hut. A man is seated at the foot of the wagon's steps with two little girls one of whom is blurred by movement. Images of children occur frequently in the series. The operatic or theatrical referred to above is in the staging: each shot held in abeyance awaiting the nod from the director to begin the action. There is a standard gesture: the subject looks up acknowledges the photographer and then ostensibly would continue work in their setting. Atget was careful not to show any images of rank deprivation or idleness.

Fig. 3.3. Eugène Atget: *Zoniers* (page 399 in Nesbit).

It is when seen alongside the second Zonier page in Nesbit's catalogue that this begins to intensify (Nesbit, 1992, p. 399). Again on album page five, three photographs of the Ivry camp and one at Masséna. Porte d'Ivry. Zoniers – 1912 (13th arr.) Top left: a small desolate hut with

'charming' detail of lace curtains. This was a detail to which Atget was attached, he enjoyed the vignette (the tracery of the vine) whenever he could and indeed considered it an important component of his working methods. (Krauss, 1986, p. 149) Top right: a very strong photograph of a Zonier compound showing all the traces of rubbish collection; brooms, rakes, scraps of material, old crates and broken crockery (crockery recycling was another side-line for the Chiffonier) set off against an emaciated group of trees somewhat denuded by the halations of early morning light. Lower left: another image of a hut this time with a chiffonier sitting with a collection basket and image of picturesque simplicity; a man, his dwelling, a potted plant, lath and plaster in serious decay (one wonders just for a moment if this is a kind of Brechtian opera and thus ironic as it were overdoing the picturesque 'symbols, trying to make them into allegorical 'emblems'.) Lower right: a movement along a corridor of chiffonier dwellings an 'establishing' shot for a discreet group found throughout the album –a fetid corridor, the only one of the first images to be on upright format thus emphasizing the narrow space. Here the filthy looking and rundown huts are dowsed by falling light, the technique of stopping down into the light. The light positively explodes over the alley burning out the rooftops. This is somewhat resonant with other kinds of historical photographs such as the American Civil War photography of Alexander Gardner or George Barnard. It is not possible to say whether Atget had seen any of these images. If he had he would have certainly been envious of the light available to the American photographers.

The Structure of the Album:

Porte d' Ivry, including Boulevard Masséna, supplies the largest number of photographs in the *Zoniers* album, amounting to a total of fourteen. (Fig. 3.2) The second largest group, consisting of nine photographs was taken at the Porte de Montreuil, one of the largest concentrations of Zoniers camps. The third largest group was made in the Asnières/Valmy area, amounting to seven photographs. Other photographs were taken at the Porte d'Italie and the Cite Dorée and make up six images each. A smaller group, taken at Poterne de Peupliers in the thirteenth *arrondissement* accounts for a further five photographs and the Asnières/Trébert zone, a further four photographs. There are three more locations consisting of three photographs each; Butte aux Cailles, Avenue des Gobelins and Choisy. A final and single photograph was taken at Rue Amiral Mouchez, just off Boulevard Jourdan in the thirteenth *arrondissement*.

In total the sixty images are a documentary project that show the working and social life of the Zoniers. The album gives a compelling account of the horizon raggedly shaped by the temporary Chiffonier houses and huts. The photographs also represent how I have defined topology: firstly by the transformation of topographical information into picture analogues and secondly, by the complexity of meaning entailed in juxtaposition of surfaces that see archaeological evidence and the phenomena of modern trash coincide. By the interstitial nature of this, the interplay of representation (the community of Chiffoniers) against the abstraction of space, Atget's document produces a double meaning; it is both archaeological and phenomenological as topography folds

into topology. This can be defined by the movement of Atget, hauling his heavy camera on a cart through the Zoniers in movements, which crisscross the area to be photographed and represented by the page sequencing of the album.

There is strong possibility that Atget visited each site only once which would indicate a planned movement. This suggests that he drew out a diagram, amounting to a topological figure much in the manner of the mathematician Leonhard Euler's walk over the Seven Bridges of Konigsberg in 1738. Euler crossed each bridge only once during a walk through the city, a complex problem given the topography. It is perhaps worth noting that coincidental with the time of Atget's work in the Zoniers, the science of topology was undergoing rapid development in the work of Riemann, Poincaré and Cantor, each of whom had begun to research the complexities of mathematical topology in the context of number sets. What is of interest here is less this mathematical topology, but the circumstantial cultural uses of topology as the enfolding of different yet continuous surfaces of social existence (Fig. 3.3).

The proximity of the Zoniers with the *embourgeoisement* of Haussmann was to bring to the fore paradoxical spaces which were beginning to be thought by isometric mapping having an impact on social planning. It is likely that such topological proximities accounted at least in some form for the attitude of Atget without having been his subject. However, Atget chose to call the set 'Zoniers' and not 'Chiffoniers', suggesting a spatial awareness that the zone of space had some implicit meaning and a historical cause that the set was dedicated to document. The Chiffonier would give social reality to the group, but was not the overriding and necessary aim of it. However, the military use of the Zoniers would have been known to Atget from his own military surveying work and perhaps influences Atget's idea, in that the Zoniers is another word for military defence. The outcome of this work in laying out a *topos* of investigation is to permit the comparison of such photographic series as equitable to the use of graphs of probability, which had become important in the area of social administration and policy. I am suggesting that the photography of sets were equivalent to the "axiomatic abstractions" of early 20th century social policy in France as both archaeological and phenomenological. (Hacking, 1991, p. 193)

The photographs introduce another quotient of meaning; that of the public evidence of a truth claim. Atget would have easily obtained support for the project to go to the Zoniers as it was an area under policy review, but his work would have provided scant evidence of what the authorities would want to find. However, I think Atget is

deliberately contrary; he did not enter the Zoniers like a policeman to expose how bad things were there, but he went to show how productive and 'good' things were. Thus Atget provided information in the publicly visual sphere offered by photography that would counter the abstractions of the polis. It is strange though to think that he believed this would be a product to market, that the bourgeoisie who consumed photography might find of interest.

Techniques Zonier:

The album reveals a technique different to that of the architectural photographer who had much less need of the topological role of the camera. For Atget, space in the Zoniers had to be taken obliquely by careful use of angulation as no frontal image easily presents itself on site and consequently there is a parallax, an offsetting of the image to the lens further necessitated by the early morning light. The radical nature of this work is the lack of any references to civic propriety. By the discovery of the Zoniers camps mostly hidden from view, Atget not only lifted the lid on the Paris Zoniers, but included the lid itself, the mountains of detritus culled from the dustbins of the wealthy that the Chiffonier had scavenged, or perhaps in a word more apposite, given the political history of the Parisian working class, 'reclaimed'.

Atget clearly supports the legal rights of the Chiffonier against the state. Possibly, Atget's former career as an actor came to the fore here as he would have been only too aware of the Chiffonier as romanticised denizens of the city's backlots and considered to be 'colourful' characters. He appears to have the trust of the Chiffonier and this makes for some informal photographs that are actually very unique in the history of photography. (Krase, 2006, p. 90) He enters an area, which the authorities would rather conceal and which the bourgeoisie would only ever encounter when glancing out of the window of the train. This is a key point in that Atget does not take on the role of the observer but, on the contrary, shares the role of the observed. In this sense Atget's technique appropriates the tradition of the picturesque, but heightens it by quoting the trappings of the genre: poverty, texture, even social quaintness and sentimental objects in a state of decay. Instead, Atget works the carapace of the Zoniers camps giving accurate and often close up views of the Zoniers dwelling, caravans, tents and ramshackle huts. If Atget then refuses the dominant position in the Zoniers does this mean he had a popular concept of photography, that he saw himself in a positive way as man of the people? The question of how he viewed himself cannot be known.

However, the use of an overarching concept of the Zoniers' subject does require explanation as this brings forward an idea of what Atget believed photography should do and is quite another matter from the anecdotal aspects of Atget's mission.

If photography is to have content is must also possess its concepts and these ideas and categories would have, most likely, been forged by Atget's experiences as an actor who then chose to become a photographer. It is impossible to know the precise relation of these two activities, but clearly they are not so different than at first they might seem. The fact that Atget spent many years in repertory has been somewhat undervalued. It is hard to resist the thought that Atget must have, like an actor, rehearsed on the model he had available to him. Hence, as he proceeded to photograph he would become more aware over time of how the point of view generated a metaphorical content of its own, i.e. the camera becomes itself a way of composing vision through its technical apparatus. This metamorphosis of actor to photographer would be to state that, as Atget's actor background is to his vaunting of the popular, so his photographic practice is to the technical sign. In the synthesis of the people, the *populaire* of Atget's idea of modernity with the technical sign or commodity required for the archive, the relations of topography, topology and typology are structured. Arguably photography is perhaps never art in the sense of a pure concept – although it can be artistic qualities – but is nonetheless a performative medium where other concepts outside of the realm of art, are given visual reflection in the generation of new metaphors of place, time and event. The question for the document is as to how these metaphors are then packaged, encoded and transformed into archival information.

When he went to the Zoniers, Atget was able to assume more autonomy since in the previous year he had sold the first album, *Vieilles Paris*, for sixty thousand francs and this was to prompt him to change his status from *Artiste* to *Auteur Editeur* in the tax records. Now he saw himself specifically as operating in a particular trajectory; still commercial, as he was in business, but that the business of the document was changing and becoming attenuated to Atget's taking up of the idea of the commodity sign. What Atget had observed was the commodity-form of photography in direct correlation to the administration of space in terms of property relations. He photographs in the Zoniers at the very moment when the political approach of the Third Republic becomes not just planning, but social mobilisation requiring increasingly abstract administrative norms. As Nesbit shows, (Nesbit, 1992, p. 98) Atget quickly learnt how to exploit this discovery by making space in his document for his own self-reference involving him in

the act of making his own photographs when he is seen reflected in the spare space beneath the sign in the shop windows of central Paris. He now 'conceptually' mapped his awareness of the fact that he was in the act of photographing into the inhospitable Zoniers space. He now includes himself amongst the detritus of the technical sign and becomes a part of his own subject.

> "This enabled him to insert himself among the signs, to make his authorial presence if not his personality felt and to show his true position as an *auteur*: he did not identify himself with the technical signs of the image; the document was fetishized in the intermediate spaces that bound the signs together and held the functional ambiguity in place. It was in the binding and grafting of signs that Atget emerged as an author." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 99)

Atget had to abandon his previous practice and work with more trust than before. There was now a space behind his as much as in front. What presents is a perspective less than even the slightest concession to bourgeois civility and his practice as a photographer becomes more critical.

The photographs in the Zoniers are political photographs in the factual sense. Here are depicted those unable to enter the polis. They are not the legal citizens, but those who camp on the fields, who feed on scraps, but are also when the needs arise, there to pick over and then bury the unwanted of the city. The Chiffonier performs a spatial function: Atget maps its *topos* and in so doing opens up another space, cutting through time. Of all Atget's works, these photographs of denuded landscapes seem to bear out Walter Benjamin's assertion that Atget's work "acquires a hidden political significance" as the "standard evidence" for historical occurrences which Benjamin equates with "scenes of crime." (Benjamin, 1999, p. 220) In those scenes, common in the Zoniers, Atget is a protagonist, his gaze shaping the screen of the topography to a level of coincidence furnished by heaps of trash.

The Document of the Zoniers:

It soon became apparent that Atget's specialty, the document, was essentially a document of loss associated with the irreversible changes taking place in the city of Paris. The statement or content of the document whilst not a deliberate disavowal of the aesthetics of pictorial photography was to put, above all, the document as just that like any other document as a functioning surface. The trenchancy of Atget's only public utterance, "These are Documents that I make" is to be taken, then, at face value. He

made documents not pictures, not art, but documents. This was not an attempt at being enigmatic, but the fundamental truth and self-knowledge of Atget's mission: the making of documents by photographic means.

Molly Nesbit in one of the strongest passages of her text (Nesbit, 1992, p. 89) makes extensive questioning of the category of authorship by way of outlining Atget's approach to his work. She notes, for instance that the term author did not in French law, distinguish between artists or types of authorship; the category was very broad and this leant it a certain problem of attribution. By the problematic of authorhood, its lack of distinction between author and authors in general, Nesbit considered Atget's work in a dramatic widening of its context, namely to see the photographer, 'Atget' in the role of 'author-function' the bottom line of authorship that takes in both the most humble of productions as well as the most lauded works of literature as essentially all as having an agency somewhere in 'author-function' and recognised by French law. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 90)

Atget's archival work determined that whilst he authored his documents, he made no claim on them as artistic works like a painting, sculpture or novel. The author-function then represented a category sufficient to explain that the author-person named Atget would not be assimilating him to the mode of authorial works in terms of the *authority* conferred by those works' style. Thus Atget's document holds; it is included in authorship in general but specifically is not a uniquely authored artefact thus explaining the motto of the documents *for* the artist and not therefore, *by* the artist. Atget's authorship is limited to that of the document but which increasingly operates on a contradiction between industry and culture, archaeology and phenomenology, which is where, for Nesbit, Atget's documents become a "source of power." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 98)

If a Foucaultian analysis of the discursive function of the photographs of the Zoniers could be made and a certain episteme, or truth claim analysed it would be to insist that the photographs engage in the production of statements. The power of the statement in terms of its opaque existence is not, for Foucault, in its propensity for interpretation, which is to say in Atget's case that the photographs are not to be read as pictorial metaphors but as documentary actualities. The serious statement in a photograph in paper document is then to 'actualise' a condition of the polis itself as both administrative area and historic archaeological site as public evidence. It is not to interpret it, nor to lend it the signature of an artwork. The document of the camera apparatus is in the form of a transparent screen – in effect the same kind of screen

apparatus as the *dispositif* discussed previously. Foucault writes, "Although the statement cannot be hidden, it is not visible either; it is not presented to the perception as the manifest bearer of its limits and characteristics. It requires a certain change of viewpoint and attitude to recognised and examined in itself." (Foucault, 1994, p. 111) This notes that the document is in the form of a cipher that requires a certain reading and that reading is not the authorial one of a subject reading it, but a form in which the document contributes to another kind of knowledge that is without a subject, a form of dispersive totality.

The subject of the Zoniers is the document of political space. To politicise space is to document or to 'statement' it. This would coincide with Foucault's theory of the statement as impersonal and empty of a subject: "The analysis of statements operates (therefore) without reference to a cogito." (Foucault, 1994, p. 122) In separating the speaking subject from a cogito, from a reference to the 'I think' to one who pronounces, instead, in the form of an 'it is said', Foucault removes the discourse into an exterior place of the statement, but the actual space of surveillance in which the camera (or its dispositif) stands. The 'it' is the word that situates the statement as an apparatus of exteriority, an outside but not a totality in itself. 'It is said' cannot be interpreted as the anonymous voice of a collective, but is that space that 'thinks', which Foucault calls the "positive unconscious of knowledge" (Foucault, 2003, p. xi) produced as both thought and unthought within the nexus of transformations and energies that constitute a domain of power. The discourses or systems legitimising the regularity of statements to take place are predicated outside of the contingencies and actualities of authorship into the necessary convention of norms and practices. Authority can only generate statements from within these requirements of exteriority and Atget's photographs remain in this condition of exteriority, as they are statements of authority without an author, or rather an author who is outside of authorship by only assuming the role, that is of an author function, who has skilfully disguised the entry into the matrix of the statement.

The photographer in order to be up to the task must, then, be equipped with certain acuity so as not simply to seek out the analogies of culture to nature. Atget's the topologist of the topography must do more. For him, it is not enough to simply record objectively an image in terms of its homology, but following Foucault's archaeology, to decipher its document. Clearly in some sense intended here, Atget both achieves and anticipates a new 'aesthetics' of surveillance and firmly attaches his photographic

outputs to the exigencies of the document, rendering his "These are only documents that I make", as having political relevance.

In the purview of Foucault these documents are statements not about authorship, but about the precise measures of archaeological depth of surfaces and inscriptions deciphered by the archaeologist of knowledge that may run counter to the development of the rationale of the "human sciences". (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 2002 p. 94) This indexicality, if the evidences of archaeology can be referred as such, is then to present evidences of things occurring historically anew, but as given *apriori* as if to say they are already historically immutable categories of space and time. Foucault's revelation of the "historical apriori" then is where the archaeologist counters the rational as itself a historical category. (Foucault, 1994, p. 126)

For Foucault this has widespread and profound implications: for the historical *apriori* uncovers another order of observation in the phenomenon or appearance of 'Man' in the Classical Age. (Foucault, 1989, p. 355) Instead of the transcendental subject of man there is the empirical 'doubling' of 'man' as the former historical subject is disappeared in 'life, work and language', representing the "hiatus that occurred in the modern *episteme* at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" which according to Foucault sees a synthesis of Descartes' subject of the cogito and Kant's 'transcendental motif' in a new formula, phenomenology.

Phenomenology is ultimately to question the 'apodictic', incontrovertible evidence, which originates from a thought that affirms itself wherever it thinks. It is however, to show that thought eludes self–certainty and is merely the condition of possibility for a subject. (Foucault, 1989, p. 354) Instead of the one, the autonomous subjective 'I', there is repetition, as the 'I' becomes drawn into a circuit of representations *qua* representations. This is the value of Foucault's designation of man in the synthesis of the 'empirical' and the 'transcendental' that Man is both epistemological and phenomenological construct.

The arrival of photography was arguably a technology that arrived amidst the very epistemological hiatus detected by Foucault in the first decades of the nineteenth century that also brought about the phenomenological subject. This is to mark the end of the representation of Man as transcendent agent. Photography implicitly bears witness to the birth of an image of Man (and things in general) as the phenomenological presentation is already a historically determined structure of representation.

Before photography the depiction of society was dependent upon allegorical and religious manifestations of the image as dependant on onto-theological interpretations. Whilst photography reconfigures the theological perspective, it also simultaneously dispenses with a need for such metaphorical symbolisations and moves very quickly into specific table of representations suitable for comparative analysis. Although theological metaphors continue to flourish in painting their appearance in photography though immanent, is muted. However, as shall be seen such metaphors burst through again in other photographs by Atget. Photography would thus, as the emergence of a surface of presentation, be seen as a key epistemological break in Foucault's terms. Now with the means to represent Man *ad infinitum* by difference and identity, so Man as an empirico-transcendental concept is discarded in favour of actuality and becomes bound to the regularity of the indexical *dispositif*, as a construction of analytical vision. Analogue technology now attains its political and social maturity as the purveyor of rational judgment.

Atget's practice is an anonymous doubling, a topological practice in between the places of archaeology and the image. Atget's archaeology of photography (his statistical variant) is to be located in the Zoniers where the power of the photograph is not gained through its necessary indexical link, its physical-pictorial relation to its object, but precisely and insofar as this very indexicality is given a style of expression. Atget does produce documents in the form of a photography given to standard modes of production, but they are not in any sense ordinary documents. They are not performative in any way, they do not read instructively; their authorship is mute, but subtly ambivalent. This power donated by Atget recognises the photograph's additional ability to provide the commodity capital, the image plus the image-effect, of an archival form now gathered as a totality. In terms of the political economy of the image in the Third Republic, one sees most obviously perhaps, in the burgeoning image commodities in general, an extension to Marx's idea of fluid capital to also include the whole archive of cultural capital.

> "The statistician, like the archaeologist, considers human affairs from an entirely abstract and impersonal standpoint. He (sic) pays no attention to individuals, to Peter or Paul; he concerns himself only with their works, or rather, with those acts of theirs which reveal their wants and ideas, with the act of buying and selling, of manufacturing, of voting, of committing or repressing crime, of suing for judicial separation, and even with acts of

being born, of marrying, of procreating, and of dying." (de Tarde, 1904, p. 102)

Photography as documentary cataloguing would appear to support the view of sociologist, Gabriel de Tarde who establishes that statistics and archaeology are identical. Archaeological finds and statistical data are reversible for de Tarde; both are also historical information and can be translated into analogues, the geometry of numbers productive of a statistical picture. In terms of photography it would be to offer a much more detailed recording than a diagram, such as sequences or sets of images allowing for the engagement with the topography to develop over time that is to locate place in space. Although also, in a sense, a statistical diagram, a photograph is always going to, because of its innate 'pictoriality', appeal to the senses by way of exacting a memory against empirically observed reality. The connection to photography in de Tarde's work is thus reflected in the very subjective and imitative paradigms at the very centre of Tardian sociology. Given that imitation is also equivalence, i.e. analogous in view of the dispersion of information (by statistical data or whatever) would be to underscore that the use of photographic archives as statistical/archaeological resources that uncover and rearrange archaeological evidence by diagrammatic pictorial modes of representation. (Tagg, 1988, p. 64)

In the Zoniers, Atget confronts the results of this spatial and political economy caused by the increasingly administrative mapping of social spaces when he sets out his camera positions in the desolate *topos* of the camps. The condition of the Chiffonier *habitus* was ostensibly the target of Atget's camera, but there was also the archaeological meaning, not by subjective intimation on Atget's part, but by material evidence in the fusion of objects in the junkyards.

That Atget's camera tracks the obverse to bourgeois positivity constitutes the real objective of this work. There are no concessions here and this demonstrates Atget's outstanding ability as a topographical archivist or, as one is tempted to say, 'geographer'. For without any moral compunction but the requirement of the 'scientific' expression of the statement as document, Atget's archaeology is to track the downward spiral of communities on the brink of existence. It is a dangerous mission; for this is inevitably to contrast the illusions of a way of life, *habitus* (in its concomitant meaning of civilisation) with *mundus*; the mundus, the cataclysmic and fetid dump, the outwash of the city, its detritus. (Fig, 3.4)

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21 Porte de Choisy. Zoniers, 1913 (13ᵉ arr)

22 Porte de Choisy. Zoniers – 1913 (13ᵉ arr)

23 Poterne des Peupliers, Zoniers – 1913 (13ᵉ arr)

24 Poterne des Peupliers, Zoniers, 1913 (13ᵉ arr)

Fig. 3.4 Eugène Atget: *Zoniers* (page 403 in Nesbit)

This is a powerful group of photographs showing very clearly the makeshift conditions of the camps and the bleak windswept grounds of the zonier. The lower left image shows a chiffonier family proudly standing outside their fixed site dwelling. What is of interest is the fact those depicted seem well–fed and confident of themselves as they were economically independent workers.

53 Campement de chiffonniers, B^d Masséna, 13e arr) 1913

54 Cité Doré, B^d de la gare 70, 1913, 13e arr)

55 Cité Doré, B^d de la gare 70 – 1913 (13e arr)

56 Cité Doré, B^d de la gare 70, 1913 (13e arr)

Fig. 3.5. Eugène Atget: Zoniers (page 411 in Nesbit)

Atget used very deep perspectives and a wide-angle lens in some of the photographs: The depth emphasizes the claustrophobic nature of the streets and lends an oppressive air to the images. Cité Dorée was a notorious area of decrepit yards used by the chiffonier to sort their pickings and bundles are frequently spotted by Atget along with stacks of old furniture. The photograph at top left is a pair with another image, which appears in the Fortifications album. It is the entrance to one of biggest camps on Blvd Masséna and taken, I would suspect, just after Atget had made one of his greatest images discussed below.

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Zonier and Heterotopia:

Atget would not have known precisely what he would achieve when he went to the Zonier, but he was sure in his interest that these camps were living on borrowed time and that soon they and their inhabitants would be moved on by the progress embourgeoisement, the consequences of Haussmann. Atget would have recognised the temporary legal status of the zones as they were administratively caught between the military and the State. It was precisely their indeterminate nature that had supported the inhabitancy, but, increasingly, this caused much consternation for the Prefecture of the Seine (the Paris region) as well as the military. The Zoniers were required for development; the *Portes* required modernisation and the defences themselves to be upgraded. Given this condition then, it is useful to consider the Zoniers in the terminology of the *heterotopia* as suggested by Nesbit:

> "Atget found himself at the dawn of the knowledges, before they had actually broken forth into discourse, while they were still cogitating, recollecting, pulling thought together, preparing a weave, and he operated in this half light between the knowledges, in a space that was by and large outside them all (…). To be on the outside was not the beggarly position, only the one that stayed low and marginal, content to be surrounded by chaos, the *hétérotopie*. This preference for liminal chaos characterized Atget's work." (Nesbit, p. 80)

Nesbit's insight merits further examination because in the concept of the heterotopia there is much that reflects on photography in itself – not least the question of whether the photographer is part of the picture or effectively excluded from it. Furthermore in the Zoniers some of Atget's photographs extend the idea of the heterotopia to the blurring of the tension between the formless and the sacred, the very locus of heterotopic discourse as defined by Michel Foucault. (Foucault, 1986, p. 22)

The discourses of heterology then are to delimit the space of the 'other'. The gist of Foucault's argument is that the heterotopia is a historical development in the history of utopias originating in urban populations, requiring that the perception of death was no longer a spiritual event but a material one. Thus there arrives the statistical problem of death as an 'illness' and the efforts required to deal, not with the dead person's soul on its trip to immortality, but the brute fact of the dead human body. The spatial example Foucault privileges are the nineteenth century cemeteries which, for reasons of space and public health (death spreads death) are identified with suburban sites away from the

overcrowded city centres – "the shift of cemeteries toward the suburbs […] came to constitute, no longer the sacred and immortal heart of the city, but the 'other' city" (Foucault, 1986, p. 25) – precisely that very city which Nesbit calls the 'Third City' (Nesbit 1992, p. 133) that had begun to grip Atget's photographic projects. Except, of course, in this instance it was not dead people or graveyards that concerned him but the popular modernity of dead commodities. The *hétérotopie* that interested Atget was that out of sight place where the excluded led their hard existence in amongst the rubbish left for them to pick over by the bourgeoisie. This is not to overlook the specific states of liminality as differentiated by political and historical realities. The necessity of identifying states of existence with the other as encountering differences is often defined by special historical or political circumstances. Nesbit implies this much; heterotopia in some respects cannot be a part of modern space as they attempt to elude registration or put up barriers of privacy so exclusive as to be "a lunar *impensé*" (Nesbit, 1992, p. 141) and unthinkable even for a 'man of the people' like Atget. These circumstances in the Zoniers are conflictual because of the illegality of the campsite and on behalf of the authorities viewing the presence of the Chiffonier as both a criminal risk and a block on progress and change. The ordinances of the 1880's were reinvoked on a number of occasions to try and ban the Chiffonier from their 'Nation'. That they failed to do so, the Chiffonier only being assimilated in the need for soldiers in World War One, most certainly would strike a chord with Atget. It would appeal to a hard-line Dreyfussard; to rub the military's face in the dirt, but essentially he remained outside of the Chiffonier world and unable to penetrate its habitus (Fig. 3.5).

It is only when Michel Foucault investigated the heterotopia as a concept of the history of space there occurs a powerful resonance with the liminal zones of habitation as also marking the place of the other as subject. Foucault's text on heterotopias anticipates the disciplinary model for the general disciplining of the living body in society by so designating the place as to where the body is consigned to dwell. The undercurrent of Foucault's reading is that heterotopia is a contradictory space which inverts its resemblance to the orders of representation and takes the form of a displaced interiority. This is to render the metaphor of place opaque such that the rules of entry or the practices involved in the rites of dwelling are impermeable. The topological nexus created dissolves the propriety of habitus, or rather renders it transparent in the process. Heterotopias then operate outside of easily assimilable representations. In my view, the Zoniers are such a heterotopic space *par excellence*, as they affect representations. They

invert the propriety of the bourgeoisie insofar as the usual metaphors of aesthetic space such as 'landscape' are returned to a more preontological state, based on proximity and distance, the near and far. In heterotopia, distance is actualised and the bourgeois subject is denied reflection. At stake in heterotopia then are conditions that relate back or forward in time and subvert the enforcement of the present insofar as immediate and spontaneous presence of self-certainty is to be displaced. Heterotopias are thus equivalent to anachronous simulations of time and space.

As Kevin Hetherington has shown in Foucault's own work, in particular his reading of Surrealist painting in the essay on Rene Magritte (Hetherington, 1997), the key trope of the heterotopia is the absorption of metaphor or resemblance back into similitude or metonymy by the topological circuit in the words painted under the image of a pipe; 'This is not a pipe', thus the logos of metaphor turns itself inside to out (negates itself) in the metonymy of its typology (not a pipe), that is, the image of pipe is 'not' a pipe, but a painting of a metonymic simulation and thus a double negation. Heterotopia then are other spaces that may be defined outwardly as negatively at one with their similitude, and are thus undermining of them by contradictory process of overfilled, hypostatised rituals. The heterotopia is the very threshold upon which the civilisation of habitus *returns* to fecund mundus. Hetherington supplies a very useful quote from John Harkness that explains a prevailing acceptance of semblance as the logic of representation that dictates resemblances *per se* as in Foucault's words, 'presumed primary reference'. Eschewing resemblances in favour of similitude (which I have termed 'negative' representation above) Harkness writes:

> "Resemblance serves and is dominated by representation. With similitude on the other hand, the 'reference' anchor is gone. Things are cast adrift, more or less like one another with out any of them being able to claim the privileged status or model for the rest. Hierarchy gives way to a series of exclusively lateral relations." (Harkness quoted in Hetherington, 1997, p. 43)

Similitude, as distinct from representation *per se*, can also be seen in Foucault's example of the displacement caused by mirroring, and here the heterotopias come very close to a metaphor of photography, in a negative sense. For Foucault, the mirror is itself a heterotopia insofar as the reflection and person who casts it are absolutely identical and irretrievably separated by the reflection, that is, impossible to realise even as the mirror image is the same as the thing reflected. The mimetic functioning of the

mirror is as a surface within which one cannot see oneself as oneself, but only as one's reflection. This other of oneself is always over there in the other space from whence one is excluded making the "…place I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass though this virtual point which is over there." (Foucault, 1986, p. 24)

The virtual point is the same as photographic analogy as similitude is a negative distance, not just in space, but also in time. Photographs to be viewed must already have been taken and like heterotopias are chronocentric differences. There is a paradox insofar as photography would then be recruited in the mirror-function to display its own heterotopic shift and each photograph would be so radically other as not to make any sense. How does photography not achieve what by its own logic it should? Why do not photographs stand on their own? The answer must be that photography is the same difference each time, producing pictures compossible to all potential functions as the sites of primary judgments. Photography then is not a positive in the sense of verification of resemblances (its supposed watertight identity), but rather acts to delete or negate the resemblance by offering a simulacrum in its stead. Photography 'kills' the subject as a primary reference and is only capable of secondary judgments that are observation rather than observing. The very completion of its function as a primary reality is foreclosed by its mimesis. This is very different from the 'natural' mimesis of formal representations, as it does not follow any symbolic order of expression that can be seen as a condition of an authored artwork. In some ways, and to follow the above argument, it would be to put photography beyond art, or, rather at the end of art. As photography is merely to provide an analogue copy, it could be argued that this copying function can colonise all other forms of visual art.

Now the photographic mirror arrives as the origin of an archival purpose, which determines its role is no longer necessary for the medium of photography to discern its own specific models or codes of reference for the reason that they are always the same photographically. Photography then has no meaning of its own – it is a *parasite*, and it cannot then present the clear distinction of subject and object but acts to (con) fuse them. Hence the sense that all technical reproductions seem to require a response that identifies with them, a screen intervenes that is inseparable from the image it presents and like its statistical forebears now sets in train an indeterminate form of determinacy, a contingency of image to which the subject is obliged to conform.

From Habitus to Mundus:

The history of the heterotopia can also be associated with the history of Camp. By this it is meant that these 'other spaces' or 'spaces of the other', are essentially theatrically exaggerated spaces accompanied by a certain ritualistic hierarchy of forms. The impermanent character of the Zoniers would be to link the ramshackle spaces of exclusion in the zones as 'practiced utopias' (Foucault's own term for the heterotopia) or, in this instance, campsites that oversee the melting down of bourgeois propriety in the very normal, yet ironical, modes of existence carried out there. It is to reveal an incoherence that dissimulates such orders of space and instead provides the obtuse reflection for what can be termed, following T. J. Clark (Clark 1989, p. 28) 'deliquescence', the melting and the entropic decline of the very substance of ground. Atget does not photograph landscapes, because that would be to deny the reality of the Zoniers, the landscape does not exist, there is only space. He manages to elude the landscape and ruthlessly exposes its metaphor as the fantasy of the bourgeoisie who would never enter into the Zoniers. (It will later become clear that Atget took another view also when in the Fortifications as he mordantly plays on the codes of pastoral art). For now, Atget's gaze meshes with the objects it perceives; aggregates, accumulations, masses. It is speculative but the question of use value emerges here as it is inverted in the mass dumps of the camps with their great piles of junk so dense it becomes difficult to make out what is what. It is reminiscent of the "petrified factuality" of Georg Lukács' concept of reification in the use of facts (i.e. objects) as the "highest fetish" of bourgeois class consciousness here overturned and given again in the Zoniers scrapheap, post-symbolic form. In Lukács schema, where the "fixed magnitude" of the world is frozen into a series of immutable certainties it is to expose (Lukács urges the reference to Marx's coruscating critique of Jeremy Bentham) the "petty normalcy" of utilitarianism. (Lukács, 1971, p. 184) Uselessness overtakes use in the Zoniers; heterotopia is the fetish of the obsolete.

Even as the heterotopias are Camp utopias and are thus preserved as a discursive and documental heterology, so Atget's photography also comes into contact with anthropology and thus advances on structuralism. This is not meant in the manner of an anthropologist who studies a race or tribe of people. Rather, Atget's brand of anthropology (if it can be called that) follows the statistical archaeology of de Tarde. Both these models would anticipate an attitude later taken up in Henri Lefebvre's cultural geography.

> "With the dimming of the 'world' of shadows, the terror it exercised lessened accordingly. It did not however disappear. Rather it was transformed into heterotopic places, places of sorcery and madness, places inhabited by demonic forces – places which were fascinating but tabooed."
> (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 263)

The imposture of normalcy arrived at as statistically 'dimming the world of shadows' above is *not* to opine that this is how Atget thought his own work. Atget did not attempt to enlighten, but to inform of a movement of urban space promoting the thought that Henri Lefebvre's approach to space may share a common root. Whilst great care needs to be taken in applying any *apriori* meaning to Atget's work the metaphor/metonym combination of the camera/mirror is topologically exploited by Atget as the camera operator and his absorption in the matrix of his own document and the critical geography of Lefebvre with its sophisticated use of Marxist dialectic. Yet there is a conception of space shared, insofar as Atget's photographs even as they eschew, indeed, attack the landscape models of art, do so in a context of production that Lefebvre would in all probability understand whether or not he ever saw any of Atget's work.*

Lefebvre retained a fundamental focus on the material conditions of existence and his working methods consequently, and according to Stuart Elden, shift "from speculation to *praxis*" (Elden, 2004, p. 84), the foundational block of Lefebvre's key concept of 'dialectical materialism'. "Space itself, at once a product of the capitalist mode of production and economic-political instrument of the bourgeoisie will now be seen to embody its own contradictions". (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 129)

The Photography of Spatial Production:

Lefebvre's interest in heterotopia is thus filtered through paradigms of places of domination and appropriation and the locus of habitus is associated with Gothic and classical structures as absolute, "architecture directly descended from the providential […] that unity of reason and faith whose culminating expression was the *Summa Theologica*". (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 258)

The concept of abstract space, which in modernity supersedes absolute space and terminates in the habitus transferred to the ideological constructs of class consciousness,

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*During the time when Lefebvre, and even later, Foucault, were developing their ideas, there was no exhibition in Paris of Atget. As already explained it is not until the emergence of research in the United States (Szarkowski and Morris-Hambourg, 1983) that interest in Atget is rekindled in France.

begat by violence, is for Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 2004 p. 135) at one with the condition of the commodity form coextensive with the development of the sign and what I refer to as the analogue.

> "The power of the sign is extended both by the power of knowledge over nature and by the sign's own hegemony over human beings; this capacity of the sign for action embodies what Hegel called 'the terrible power of negativity'. As compared with what is signified (…) a sign has a repetitive aspect in that it adds a corresponding representation. (The) sign has the power of destruction because it has the power of abstraction – and thus the power to create a new world different to nature's initial one. Herein lies the secret of the Logos as foundation of all power and all authority; hence too the growth in Europe of knowledge and technology, industry and imperialism."

Recalling the previous chapter on Paris during the Commune, commercial photographers had depicted the ruins of the Tuilieries Palace as if signifying the truth of the Empire's lost glory, would seem to underscore the above. Was not this Abstraction, this specious unity, more mysterious than any real social communion? In the ruin, the very essence of total space conformed to ruin as if sublimely transcendent and thus considered more romantic for the sentimental memory of the lost Empire. (Huyssen, 2010, p. 21) Atget's photographs in the Zonier heterotopias, in reality, are to reveal the *process* of forced abstraction at work in the capitalist system. This amounted to the obverse of the representational space of habitus, which had become but a threadbare carapace transposed to Chiffonier dwelling. Both are constitutive of liminal zones in different historical epochs but are determined by their strategic uses and Atget grasps such interstitial topology by his practice reflecting the negation of the productive economy in the lineaments of Lefebvre's dialectic.

The photograph is the result of a camera, which is itself, a very particular kind of machine. It is a copy produced image, a document of number and therefore a register of identification. Logically, for a Marxist like Lefebvre, it must follow that the photographic image is a document of historical materialism. This is the image, as it contradicts itself by the formal logic of its manufacture against its subjective metaphor, which is the aesthetic and thus not an assimilable object to the cause of dialectical materialism – at least at first glance – as it is merely an appearance. However, it is an appearance in accordance with the object it copies. There is nothing behind it. The result, if Lefebvre could have grasped it, is to destabilise the formalism of content and

to short circuit the aesthetics of content and content overcomes form. It is also possible to think that Lefebvre's interest in Hegel could be instructive insofar as photography would represent the teleological determination of art, that once the photographic image assumes the archival function, it can be given as a concept over and above art. In addition, photography would seem to conceptualise or rationalise art and supresses the aesthetic comportment of formalism. (Elden, 2004, p. 40)

Atget's work in the Zoniers is in fact an intuitive photographic attempt to understand geo-political space (arguably Atget's theatrical intuition is to take hold of dialectical materialism *avant le lettre*) before Lefebvre had evolved his own catalogue of concepts. This dialectic sees that photographic realism evidenced by the project of Atget *with* Lefebvre's concept of spatial production is forged in the same milieu.

Lefebvre himself offers some endorsement of this assertion. The question at root is the relation between inner mental space and actual practiced space. For Lefebvre both classical and modern philosophy stays locked up in the bind of spatial metaphysics that no longer permits the activation of real historical conditions and the critical analysis of their production (the establishment of abstracted norms) "promoting the impersonal pronoun 'one' as creator of language in general, as creator of the system". (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 4) The result is the triumph of the 'I', the self as author of the sign. In a counter movement (taking on both phenomenology and psychoanalysis) Lefebvre wants to negate, even destroy the self–evidence of the sign, indexed as it is to the rise of the reified commodity. Lefebvre refers to Michel Clouscard's *L' être et le code*, which contains the insight of how Lenin, to counter the rise of phenomenology and its attendant individualism as tantamount to the imposture of the bourgeois subject, 'resolves' this problem by 'brutally' suppressing it, "…in *Materialism and Empirio–Criticism*, he (Lenin) argues that the thought of space reflects objective space, like *a copy or photograph.*" (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 4, note 7, my italics)

The upshot of this statement is that Lefebvre wanted to realise identity on a fundamental level of shared consciousness, *apriori* objective and not as *apriori* subjective space of an imaginary wished-for image of the world. Rather, the implication intended by Lenin is that at once, the cognition of space is transformed by the photographic analogue into a universal consciousness at the level of the objective. Furthermore, perception is itself subject to historical evolution and influenced by technology and once photography has produced for itself a space, comes to form a template for the total reception of spaces in the mind.

Lefebvre's theory of space can be taken as objective in one sense; it is to disavow the subjective projection of space and instead submit space to analytic perspective as that which is produced by its work, the practice of space. Given that the entire history of representation elides this fact until the advent of Realist painting in mid 19th century, Lefebvre was interested in arguing that modern day industrialisation and technology had changed both the space of production and its new model of consciousness. Note that in this Lefebvre somewhat inappropriately perhaps, reflects the same view as Ernst Junger who, like Lenin, gestured toward the photographic image as such a template model of 'cold consciousness', that photography could toughen the mind for the reception of the shocks of modern productions in both industry and war thus aligning Lenin's theory with that of Ernst Junger's proselytizing of cold consciousness (Werneberg, 1991, p. 53) developed by urban populations in the *Gestalt* of shock. Although Lefebvre does not confer this 'shock effect' on the technology of photographic production *per se*, the implication must be that in his dialectics it could be possible to do so; indeed Lefebvre does accord the status of the sign to photography. (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 97)

The sign is at issue for Lenin and Junger and in a rather different way to Lefebvre perhaps, because it is autonomous and can exist without author. It is impersonal and appears to have the ability to self–generate. Photographs produce other photographs in a consequential chain. Once the resemblance has given way to similitude and numerical signs they can be relied upon to control the probability of outcomes. In photography topographical spaces are given a different meaning of topological distances by drawing them closer. In one sense the topology of photographic visualisation is the double meaning of the document as both a protest against awful conditions of life and a document of policing, a knot of meanings that led Walker Evans to coin the phrase "documentary style" in order to take on board the possibility that the doubling of meaning has some equivalent in the analogue itself, as it exists externally, beyond reason and in a state of "ambivalence" (Chevrier, 1987, p. 24, n. 21) which, in turn, would be to insist that any complexity of meaning had a double sided topological character.

However, the conclusion drawn here is to detect in Lefebvre's universal idea of the production of space as also supporting a negative space. He is expressing his dissatisfaction with the way in which space is given to pure mental apprehensions at the expense of its material conditions of production within which it is inextricably and topologically enfolded. Lefebvre is sceptical of the image (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 344) as it

is an appearance concealing the relations of production behind its seductive surface. For Lefebvre then this allows for an abyssal gap to emerge between the history of social space or habitus and abstract sign-infected ideology, which has no real accommodation of space but is involved with displacements and disbursements of space as capital commodity, which triumph in the withering of the state form. However, *a propos* of the State-form Lefebvre considers habitus the ritual historic form which is preserved in State ritual acting to screen out the obscene repository.

> "A pit then, 'deep' above all in meaning is connected the city, the space above ground land as soil, land as territory to the hidden, clandestine, subterranean spaces which were those of fertility and earth, of birth and burial. The pit was also the passageway through which dead souls could return to the bosom of the earth and the re-emerge and be reborn. As locus of time, of births and tombs, vagina of the nurturing earth–as–mother, dark corridor emerging from the depths, cavern opening to the light, estuary of hidden forces and mouth of the realm of shadows, the *mundus* terrified as it glorified. In its ambiguity it encompassed the greatest foulness and the greatest purity, life and death, fertility and destruction, horror and fascination. *Mundus est immundus.*" (Lefebvre, 2004, p. 242)

This fecund and foul hole provides the negation of the origin of the State, and renders it to an accumulation of differences and violent contradictions which must remain hidden. Instead of attempting to transcend this abyss, for Lefebvre, the State should place it at the centre of its conception insofar that the mundus represents the negative idea in the heterological sedimentation of the rubbish pit.

Mundus est immundus! Interieur d'un chiffonier Blvd. Masséna:
Of all the photographs of the Zoniers that could adequately interpret the mundus, there is one that echoes Lefebvre's incantation *par excellence*. This is the justly famous *Interieur d'un chiffonier Blvd. Masséna 1912 (13th arr.) Porte d'Ivry* (Fig. 3.6). The photograph shows the pit of a yard, decked out with a plethora of discarded objects; old furniture, musical instruments, ropes, tarpaulins, various pots, pictures and mirrors, all the pieces that again reflect the predisposition of Atget for the similitude of the analogically obverse. There is the contradiction of a photographic sublime dug out of the ridiculous chaos of the Chiffonier yard. The contradiction is captured in a warp between the complexity of the ground space and the halation that shimmers between the ramshackle huts in the light blast enunciating *Helios*. It is a photograph of both

archaeological levels of time as well as a spatial horizon that functions as a mysterious stratum. One level pertains to another, transcends it and comes in and out of focus. The space of the photograph is real. The different materials and objects commence with base things; flue pipes, baskets, old furniture, lumber and oily tarpaulins that at once are just the stuff they are and the next moment are transformed by the *mundus* into ghostly masks. However this is not the mundus of ancient history but the mundus of modernity. *Mundus est immundus*, the world of excrement is the world of spiritual exaltation, to mean the correspondence of good and evil, heaven and hell. No object in the photograph is itself but it is in the very process of transmogrification into its own other and also the other of itself transformed by its similitude to a shadow figure transposed from history. The longer one peruses the photograph the more so it becomes a repository of historical nightmares; the Communard dead heaped up at Père Lachaise, the boudoir of Atget's friend, the beautiful actress, Sorel, as if her apartment which Atget so lovingly photographed, is here the very same…but after the Fall. It is a photograph for a photograph, the allegorical engine for the repetitions and revolutions of occurrences.

Fig. 3.6. *Interieur d'un chiffonier Blvd. Masséna, 1912 (13th arr.) Porte d'Ivry.* Albumen silver print 18 x 24 cm.

The *Interieur* is an image of deliquescence, of melting. The way the light halation falls into the pit, which then in turn rises up. Invoking Hegel, the rising up of the trace, which

sloughs its former incarnation behind it, or his aphorism, 'the spirit is a bone'. At every stage it is dissolution and collapse from commodity signs to the deluge of indecipherable metaphors.

In fact, the whole of the *Zoniers* album is summed up here: "the people are dead, long live the people," appears to be Atget's cry. The image is electrifying in its ability to effect such a sudden and disturbing transition. The drum on the far left perhaps once rattled on the top of a Commune barricade. Walter Benjamin includes a photograph of that drum (or one very similar) in the Arcades project. (Benjamin, 2002, p. 249) This is countered by salvage that informs the other half of the image; a framed picture propped against the wall of the shed, then below old used cooking pots, pans, ladles, ropes and scrap metal. In the depths, the dead shrouded, their muskets now long surpassed propped against the wall of the corridor as if described by Victor Hugo. The image of history is rendered uncanny presence. It does not recall, or remind us but *produces* in the same way that the analogue is the engine of the sign.

Finally, redemption of sorts: a tiny figurine of a dancer in the lower right imparts a genuine sense of magic. The image screen is inundated by a vast constellation that suddenly threatens to engulf the dancer. At the very point that an undistinguishable mass is presented, all the junk seems to manifest a historical importance unrivalled by any of the other images in the album, but with such a density to its forms it appears to be dead *and* alive. This is in the context of the degraded, the formlessness of the *populaire* in their death throes, representing the heterotopia of the graveyard. Yet, as a pulsation of putrefaction and entropy, abjection in the living corpse, is here indexed to the history, not of the obsequious Third Republic, but the tragedy of the 'Nation' which died in Père Lachaise, Bellville and Montmartre.

For Geoff Dyer, writing about it in relation to the photographic work of artist, Richard Wentworth (Dyer, 2001), noted that it 'jolts' the viewer out of a complacent appreciation of the link between the old and picturesque but instead "reminds us […] namely that in 1912, certain parts of Paris looked more like Bombay or a few years down the line – a trench on the Somme." (Dyer, 2001, p. 42) Despite the apparition of the metaphor, Dyer's comment underscores the dematerialisation for the image beyond the metaphor of material deliquescence of substance undergoing a kind of transformation, as if the very atoms are mutating to gas. Indeed the image is like a zero gravity chamber years ahead of its time. This photograph can be positioned even further than Marx imagined in his famous phrase quoted by Marshal Berman to describe the

dissimulation of relations: "All that is solid melts into air". (Berman, 1985, p. 95) An atmospheric miasma is cascading over this photograph of entropic degrading. The graveyard of all things is replayed here in the form of abject waste raised to the level of the sublime.

Summary:

Topology implies a surface, which retains its integrity no matter how much it is distorted and reconfigured and this extends to a cultural circumstance in which heterotopia is entwined with simulations of space that mimic the dominant spaces of the social order. The dominant space is always in the present thus the space of the other is temporally opaque something Atget's photographs explore so well. In this sense I have tried to discern between the three dimensional topography as representing the presence of space on the horizon with its theoretical counterpart the topology which is the representation of space in a figure. I have underscored cultural topology as opposed to mathematical models and seen that as represented by statistical analysis as itself an indicator of the historical condition of topography contingent upon regions or geographies of power. I have attempted to resolve the spatiality of Atget's photography in the context of a topological figure. (As for historicity, Atget's thinking of tradition, this will be the subject of the next chapter.) Despite the open-endedness of the current research further concepts have been introduced that may in future work prove useful. These have been associated with habitus as traditional space, which has topologically interceded with its other, the heterotopic entropy of the mundus, the very spaces that Atget encounters in the Zoniers as the condition of historical space *per se*.

It is fair to conclude that Atget's work in the Zoniers was *explicitly topographical* and *implicitly topological*. As the photographs recorded the habitus so they also negated the history of the space of Paris as one of spontaneous change. The photograph revealed the political conditions of space. The modernity of this work, whilst not exemplified by any one image – even including the superb Masséna *Intérieur* – is better conceived in a totality, in the way of the screen of meaning through which each image must pass and insofar as each image is given the same emphasis, which means the same topological unity is consistent throughout. The grid of images implies a rational system, as *logos* of power, marking the shift from vertical space to the horizontal space of modernity. This is reflected in both Lefebvre's critical geography as well as Foucault's heterotopias.

Atget's work in the Zoniers should be seen to flow through this horizon and interlocute between the excremental and sublime – the *topos* of reason and squalor. This is to describe the space of the photographs as a place that has no subject as the metaphor is opaque in the heterotopia, and bourgeois models of space are non-existent in the denuded land upon which the Zoniers exist. Place is abject in the sense that it is neither object nor subject, but entropy itself – simply a substrate of matter. It is also a supreme irony: a theatre of history and, in the *Interieur*, we are witness to one of Atget's greatest photographs.

CHAPTER 4

Atget and the Cliché of History (Fortifications)

Introduction:

In 1910, Atget began photographing in the Fortifications of Paris, the walled bulwarks, ramparts and *enceinte* trenches that had been constructed at various times over a period of some four hundred years, to ensure the security of the city. They effectively encompassed Paris, but at the gates, road, rail and pedestrian pathways breached them. Usually at these entrances, large caserne or barracks had been constructed. These were given the name of 'bastion' although they were often more like customs buildings or barrack houses than proper fortress bastions and were numbered '1' to '93'. The belt of the Fortifications, the area making up the defensive complex of mounds, ditches and grassy embankments sitting in front of the bastions and the nine-meter high wall, was uninhabited. On either side, in the areas behind and beyond the glacis, habitations had been built; a few suburban villas of brick and render existed in what was mostly a depopulated area, but in fact was a labyrinth of defensive entrenchments and salients.

As for the conditions in the areas either side of the Fortifications, the best description is by T. J. Clark, in his book, *The Painting of Modern Life*. (Clark, 2003) Here Clark offers an evocative overview of the movement from the inner arrondissements, aided by the expansion of suburban railways, into the new territories on the outskirts of the city. He offers a hard-bitten and uncompromising view in stark contrast to the oncoming *belle epoche* enjoyed by the wealthy capitalists and courtesans who now had virtually sole use of the centre of the city despite the still unquiet demands of the social republic. Here in the outskirts the *banlieu* was "the place where autumn was always ending on the empty boulevard and the last traces of Haussmann's city – a kiosk, a lamppost, a cast iron pissotière – petered out in the snow." (Clark, 2003, p. 26) There is description of what Clark calls the 'deliquescence' of the suburban zones and their bleak prospects in a landscape that is no longer the Paris of Victor Hugo where one life begins and another ends as there is no longer any town or country, but a "broken line of factories, villas and warehouses…the casual disrepair of this whole territory." (Clark, 2003, p. 30) In the previous chapter I had made use of Clark's concept of the deliquescent as informing the *topos* of the abandoned Zoniers camps.

By the turn of the century the western suburbs of Paris had expanded into the countryside outwith the Fortifications and had become separate suburban towns supplied by rail connections. The southwest aspect was decidedly more in line with bourgeois colonisation in contrast to the eastern and northeast sectors of the Fortifications reflecting the general partitioning, which left eastern Paris occupied almost exclusively by working class neighbourhoods. (Sennett, 1992, p. 135) Here in the eastern Zoniers the defensive barrier comprised a more chaotic topography of high walled defences, ditches and moats offset by temporary dwellings and the hard ground of what had rapidly become the industrial area of Paris. There were then two basic divisions in the Fortifications; between the wealthier west and the impoverished east and between those domiciled on the inside of the walls or the out and those excluded but within the Zone the subject of Atget's other set, the Zoniers of the previous chapter.

By the time of Atget's photography, the area of the Fortifications was a continuous belt of a circumference of roughly sixty kilometres around the city. Effectively the Fortifications encircled Paris in one continuous 'zone', but although the city was pronounced by the Fortifications on the inner side what was outside remained more in doubt. As to the Fortifications themselves, they enclosed the city, but were neither part of it nor were they countryside. The militarised zone of the Fortifications was then a land tract, not even an area in the strict sense, but a narrow man made undulating labyrinth.

Historical Context:

In the period when Atget photographed there, the Fortifications were the site of much policymaking. The belt itself, at this time did not inspire confidence in its defensive capability to repel modern weaponry. Its topography was, notwithstanding the defensive features of the bastion walls and ditches, traversed by a network of labyrinthine paths made by walkers who used the area for leisure purposes. There were also several breaches at the main *portes* of entry into the city. It was very easy to access the *fortifs*, as they were known colloquially, which provided an excellent leisure environment. On Sundays people would stroll and picnic as if in the grounds of a chateau and on the banks of a river rather than in the reality of moats, ditches and their neighbouring dusty *carrefours*. When Atget began to wander along the paths, banks and ditches and through the copses of trees and undergrowth, the intended function of the Fortifications was somewhat obscured by how they were actually used. It is notable that Atget avoids any

meeting with permanent developments on his excursions apart from the regularity of barrack houses and railway crossings. Any photographs that included more substantial buildings, such as villas, unless seen at a distance were kept out of his edited album, *Fortifications*, the final of his seven albums. The photographs seemed intent on portraying the belt as a specific landscape, a topography that excludes bourgeois suburbanism almost entirely. In the east and north (as has already been discussed in the previous chapter) the Zoniers area through which the fortifications landscape emerged, was the site of the rag-picker camps.

It is the aim of this chapter to explore not only the political implications of Atget's work in the Fortifications, but the idea that the photographs themselves would function as a series of decorative *vignettes*. It should be remembered that when Atget presented the album to the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1915, war with Germany had already been declared and Atget's own stepson killed on the Marne in 1914. The question about the *Fortifications* series of photographs is not simply what were they intended for, but why of all Atget's thousands of photographs are some of these the most puzzling to analysis and the most resistant to interpretation. Is there something obdurate and strange at work in them and if there is, what makes it so? Perhaps this is the aforesaid decorative 'excess', a kind of transcendence of motif. The photographs – intentionally or not – do not search for anything in particular, but end up finding an 'empty' space with which to employ a particular flair of camera photography. Maybe without even trying, Atget discovers the power to root out, even exorcise, aspects of space and history that are an 'aspect' as if preserved in the forest of the fortifications landscape. For Atget the suspicion arises that the *Fortifications* photographs were a mode of memory and contemplation, perhaps even to parody the idea of reminiscence, which Goethe once sought in the Roman Campagna. In this the photographs in the *Fortifications* album may just be Atget's ontology of photography.

Atget began to photograph the Fortifications in 1910, at the very time when the arms race that would contribute to The First World War was gaining momentum. In politics, centre right leaders were intent on establishing new lines of diplomacy, and in particular a rapprochement with Imperial Russia and seeking to isolate Germany. The *Entente Cordiale* with Great Britain had been in place since 1904. France still smarted over the defeat of 1870 and Prussia was now an industrially powerful Imperial Germany. There is no question that the threat of war was incipient at the time of Atget's first expeditions, and by 1913, when he completed his work, it had become inevitable.

Atget's Politics:

Eugène Atget was a political man, a 'polis-man', meaning an inhabitant of the city who played a role in public. Molly Nesbit implies that Atget was someone who practiced a certain tradition of French political life, that he subscribed to a certain image of the people, which for him represented modernity, the *populaire*. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 191) This is to imply socialist sentiments; he lectured in institutes for the education of the worker. He also supported and collected left-wing newspapers and journals, those that took the anti-war stance of the 'International', namely, *La Guerre Sociale*, *La Bataille Syndicaliste* and the pacifist journal the *Bonnet Rouge*. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 193) These collections, like the dossier he put together on the Dreyfus affair and which he later sold to the Bibliothèque Nationale, supported not only the contention that Atget was an observer of leftist politics, rather than politically active himself, but that he saw his own projects as a kind of evidence gathering to reveal the conditions of space produced in the Third Republic.

It would be impossible for Atget to photograph with the slightly displaced parallax of the lens that he perfected as his signature – and also the subjects he chose – without having an acute sense of the times in which he was living. He did not photograph straight on in the manner of a nineteenth century architectural photographer and the oblique angle was, perhaps, a metaphor for the changing times. Atget read the newspapers to which he contributed journalistic images and was well aware of the affects of *bourgeoisification*, which dispossessed the working classes – many of which washed up in the marginal zones outside of bourgeois propriety. This very exclusion defined the *populaire* for Atget; it repeated a whole history of displacements from before the Commune right up until the difficulties posed by industrialisation had begun to require yet more adaptation of the city's spaces. For Atget and other independent artisans, worker-tradesmen, the scandalous repression of the Commune still represented the betrayal of the Social Republic. A range of socialists, including some of Atget's mentors like the archivist, Georges Cain, still held out for some manifestation of this. Now, the terror of 1871 had new ways of being rationalised under the guise of a struggle against anarchy and an international situation that was hurtling toward an even greater conflict. Emergencies and various instruments of censorship would remain in place throughout the Third Republic, meaning that the promise of the Social Republic remained an unobtainable ideal always foreclosed by one crisis or another. For much of its near seventy years duration, and notwithstanding the fact that the Third Republic

was, on the surface at least, a 'socialist' coalition, when in reality remained much more conservative with a respectful eye on the power of the church and military as well as the aristocratic and royalist right. The *Fortifications* album cannot be viewed without cognisance of historical fact, but also for Atget "the fortifs were the figures with which to express the remove of the *populaire* from bourgeois perspective, from bourgeois control, and from bourgeois war." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 91) The photographs then are primed to a popular and public consumption.

Intentions:

The photographs were made on the cusp of a war and survey the conditions of defences that had somewhat been incorporated into the city fabric. Whether Atget's photographs were intended to alert the authorities to the conditions of the Fortifications is a moot point. In fact this is unlikely, as the photographs did not gather any interest from the military as far as could be known. It has to be assumed that by 1910, the year after Atget's independence as a producer, author *and* editor in recognition of which he changed his tax status in 1909 and (Nesbit, 1992, p. 88) owing to his contacts, would have had access information from city officials as to the future plans for the city's defenses. On this basis he would have been well aware of the conditions of the inner suburbs where change was going to occur. That information would be enough to alert Atget to record the future subjects of disappearance, the necessity of recording the past to which he directed his entire practice. In the Fortifications this is nuanced by the appearance of an interest in the natural history of the region. Because of this Atget clarifies his relation to the allegorical function of photography that had underlined the first crises of photography in the face of catastrophic events. It is a question that cannot be sufficiently dealt with here, but the intentions of Atget's 'natural history' may have included his own intuition that nature and history are most fully implicated in the theological as well as the scientific narrative of Creation.

On the face of it, the Fortifications are a simple series of photographs grouped together to take on in the sense of what it was like to stroll along the labyrinthine paths that made up the topography. As shall be explained, this unity of purpose disguised rhetorical tropes intended to allegorise the *fortif* based upon camera techniques and lines of sight. Although adhering to Atget's rules of thumb, oblique angles, careful use of aspect and view, camera kept low to enable shooting into the light etc., the *Fortifications* are the "most heavily edited sequences" of all the albums. (Nesbit, 1992 p. 193)

The album, viewed as a whole as it is laid out in Nesbit (Nesbit, 1992, pp. 414–428) is pervaded by the sense that Atget absorbs the space of the area as if on a pilgrimage to a wilderness in which the city's history itself is contemplated by labyrinthine interconnections and mediations. This is admittedly a grand claim for such documents which, when seen in sequences, are each reduced to equal status and quite repetitive. The plan behind the series offers compelling evidence that this was an ambitious project by the photographer with ramifications crossing over between a work of history and a work of decoration. In this sense the photographs have much to say about the photography of the pastoral, as much as the *Zoniers* album had dealt with containment and enclosure.

Epistemological Context:

Atget's principle was that photography was documentary and could be a form of evidence or knowledge. With this principle, Atget used photography to map the space of the city of Paris leading to the statistical topography, and the socio–archaeological discovery of that which could not be shown in bourgeois reality. For Atget, this was the subject of photography's document *par excellence*: that which is about to disappear. This is why Atget schooled himself in the vision of the Paris archivists. (Morris–Hambourg, 1983, p. 16) Georges Cain, for example, had once commissioned Charles Marville and had adopted his orthogonal and impersonal style as the ideal for the archival photograph. Marville's influence on Atget was considerable because that was the model of the document. For a while, Atget did photograph closely in the style of Marville, but by the time he had taken his camera out into the zones, he had evolved his own oblique, askance vision, which broke with the orthogonal style of Marville. (Morris–Hambourg, 1983, p. 19) Atget when he eventually arrived in the suburbs was no longer the nostalgic visionary of old Paris, but the hard-boiled observer of a modern topography. Nonetheless, he continued to seek the poetic metaphor of the French pictorial traditions. Ostensibly, the gathering of the evidence was the action, justified by the needs of the document, in effect to 'examine' the landscape, but was at the same time to link it to exact formal and compositional themes of pastoral space. This means it is possible to connect the *Fortifications* images to earlier photographs by Atget in his work on trees and decorative motifs in architecture. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 57)

Despite this, Atget does not sentimentalise his subjects nor does he play the game of recollection with which he adorned the Old Paris series. Instead he sets out to produce

documents about a space designed to confuse. The Fortifications labyrinth becomes a technical signification requiring knowledge, not only of military architecture, but also sensitivity to a relatively featureless landscape: "for savoir was still ostensibly in eyeshot, but these perspectives did not map anything like a Cartesian universe. This nature was hostile." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 190) What is at stake in the Fortifications is the tension between a sterile military environment and the needs of the *populaire*. This contradiction offers some recompense for Atget as 'author', because the Fortifications' juxtaposition of salient walls and grassy ditches provided a territory of metaphor. In the album of the *Fortifications*, Atget the author separates from Atget the editor. They are both present, but in double relation to each other, in a constant toing and froing. It is a testament to Atget's skill how he deals with this encounter with himself, how he plays upon it, as he is no doubt aware of the potential for allegory from his days in the theatre; the Fortifications were the equivalent of a theatrical backdrop. This helps to explain why he adopts the most physically difficult camera positions: low to the ground, close in on the very grain of scuffed dirt, brambles and weeds, tracks and paths, blank walls, and over grown gullies and ditches, as if the space represents something that should be attended to, as if the truth is underfoot not overhead.

The Album:

On the 3rd of March 2011, I visited the Bibliothèque Nationale to view the *Fortifications* album. It was quite a moment to be handed the heavy brown book with its marbled cover into which Atget had, by his own hand, pasted his 60 images and knowing that Walter Benjamin had, in all probability, handled it as well. The condition of the prints was superb, although the book itself showed some signs of wear. Each page was in its own way a revelation in the context of the series, but, by way of a caveat here, it should be noted that the photographs that Atget made at Bercy (page numbers 5, 16, 27, 29 and 35) and which constitute a discreet set (even though they appear on different pages in the album) will be discussed in depth in a separate study that follows this chapter. These will occasionally be mentioned here, but only in passing without going into much detail. The aim of this overview is to discuss the distribution of the different sites and to point out some of those photographs that exemplify aspects of the Fortification typology. However, the word typology is rather mute as it simply appears as normative and especially so in relation to modern photography. Typology, then, should be borne in mind as not simply a set of related images, but also as a pattern of reflections and

comparisons that echo each other, in other words, that the Fortifications typology is one of correspondences. This is to return again to the other subject of the *Fortifications*, namely the *populaire*, the underclass of Paris and those whose inhabitation of the Zoniers was under threat.

There are, as with all of Atget's albums, sixty photographs carefully stuck (glued or pasted, there are no corner mounts) to the books' vellum coloured pages and inscribed in pencil by the photographer. Why sixty? This is a deliberate choice as clearly this could be made to refer to the number of minutes in an hour and a number of seconds in the minute; it is a temporal number. If the album is sixty pages, at one minute per page the album could be read in one hour. The fact that there were seven albums would reinforce this. Why did not Atget produce eight or nine albums? The answer is that the seven are the days of the week. Sixty images; one hour, seven albums seven days and perhaps also here the last two albums qualify this. The *Zoniers*, the scrap heap of the city is, I would suggest, the Saturnalia, Saturday the festive day in the Zoniers camp, and Sunday is a day associated with the sun, with worship and leisure, the day of rest from labour. *Fortifications*, the people's landscape and the last album: in the six days of creation Sunday is the day of rest and congress, the time and the place for the reflection on the city from its no man's land, but also the monument to the alternative history of Paris, that of the people and what matters in their lives.

Other observations on the album as a whole reveal a number of other discreet parts as well as the aforementioned one at Bercy. Atget photographed at a total of fifteen different sites all of them associated with various gates and bastions linked by the walls and redoubts (Fig. 4.1). Of these, eleven are in the south, two in the northeast and two more, the sets taken at Portes Dauphine and Maillot, in the west. The reason for this bias to the south is possibly that Atget himself lived close by in Montparnasse, would have provided easy access to the gates and boulevards along the southern limit of the defences. It may also be that in this area there was a concentration of gates and thus the right kind of variation to make interesting photographs. The other reason is the presence of the "*populaire*, that terra incognita, the unthinkable other" those whom Atget believed were invested by the future of history, those members of a class of Parisians whom he had come to believe in as his particular interpretation of modernity. (Nesbit 1992, p. 116; Edwards, 1993, p. 89) The inference is that many of the site's attractions for Atget would be their popularity with the public, although the figures that mysteriously appear in some of the photographs are all singular and all men.

Fig. 4.1. Map showing locations along the Fortifications photographed by Atget.

Numerals in white:

1. Canal d'Ourcq
2. Pré - St.- Gervais
3. Porte de Bercy
4. Blvd. Masséna/ Porte d'Ivry
5. Porte d'Italie
6. Poterne des Peupliers
7. Blvd. Kellermann
8. Porte de Gentilly
9. Porte d'Arcueil/ Blvd Jourdan
10. Porte d'Orléans
11. Porte de Vanves
12. Porte de Sevres
13. Porte de Versailles
14. Porte Dauphine
15. Porte Maillot

Other features overall are worth noting; eleven of the photographs were made on the portrait format and forty-nine are on the landscape. There are certain sites that are more photographed than others. Porte Dauphine has the most with sixteen entries. Boulevard Kellerman and Poterne des Peupliers, although separate locations in the inventory, on the map they are adjacent and virtually the same area, have ten. Porte Maillot has six entries; Porte d'Ivry, Boulevard Masséna and Porte d'Italie when taken together and the Porte de Sevres and Porte d'Arcueil area also have six. The Canal L'Ourq and Pre St Gervais in the northeast have five, as does Porte de Bercy/Boulevard Poniatowski, although Bercy could be linked to those at Ivry-Masséna to form a larger set. Smaller sets were taken at Porte de Versailles, adjacent images of the site and one each of Porte d'Orleans and the neighbouring Porte de Vanves. Finally, two photographs made at Porte de Gentilly, one of which occupies the first page of the album (Fig. 4.2).

Fig. 4.2. Eugène Atget: *Porte de Gentilly. Fortifications, 1913. (13th arr.)*
Albumen silver print, 24 x 18 cm and all subsequent Atget photographs.

Description: This shows a stepped escarpment stretching to a hazy distance, the ground bare and stony. The outstanding feature is the line of trees, planted equidistant in the French manner, that extend along the base of the escarpment and define a pavement by the side of a road. More lines of trees appear on the far right of the image. On the upper left three smaller trees – of the same genus, but more spaced out – stand atop the escarpment. The lead tree's foliage takes up about a third of the surface area of the photograph with a deep brown plume of foliage. It is an empty, abstract image; there are no signs of any people other than those who have walked over this ground. The two-lane *carrefour* (the ubiquitous Boulevard Kellermann) to which the trees align reinforces this.

Reflection: The upright format emphases the spatial depth, which touches infinity at dead centre and is hazed out by the frontal light, gives to it a point of contact with the forceful presence of the bare stony ground, whereas the landscape framing (not that this would be a term recognised in Atget) would emphasise horizontality. The photograph is the archaeology of the dust and mud, the pounding underfoot and the presence of the army and the people. This first photograph has the signification, the ontological anchor of both an original and a last image. Atget's position is, as usual, close to the ground but frontal, the camera tripod legs out wide; as it goes lower so the gaze of the photograph speaks of raw material, earth and light, place and time. The sense of place here is palpable largely because there is no place; it is an empty site, an intermediate zone somewhere along a road and a caesura of a movement and therefore of time, a constant theme of all the majority of the images in the *Fortifications*. The album does not advance in essence beyond this powerful first image, but offer more instances, more examples of the space. It is the 'truth' of the *fortifs* as a region; a kind of pastoral desert, but conversely, and perhaps equally, the image is a *mis en scene* for the passing by of a carriage on a Sunday excursion. The tension between the military presence and the trampling of the *populaire* amounts to a theme of many of the photographs in the album. The images also reflect and repeat one another. For instance, number sixty in the album is a different version of the image on page one. (Fig. 4.3).

Fig. 4.3. Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers, Bd. Kellerman, Paysage des fortifications, 1913 (13th arr.)*

Description: Bright sunlight at mid–morning and a pastoral picture to suit; a line of trees (as usual echoed with another row further down the slope). A distant figure, a besuited man is captured moving slowly up the escarpment. He is slightly stooped and looking to the ground. Again, and to the left, Boulevard Kellerman's carriageway: a breeze is blowing and the leaves on the foreground tree are rustled. The bark of the tree is strongly accented by raking light and the branches bear the scars of pollarding. The photographer, as usual with Atget, appears invisible and stands in the shade often the best spot for clarity of vision. A central hump, a gun emplacement perhaps, in the near distance dominates mid-ground.

Reflection: This photograph does not have the revelation of the first, it is, after all, a 'landscape of the fortifications' and not 'Fortifications' capital 'F', but is interesting all the same. There are hints of the Barbizon painters, Daubigny or Corot who extended the landscape motif into romantic realism. It also shows that Atget planned the albums on a basis that relied upon symmetry. The collected aspects are simply a record; the camera was here meaning that it saw with Atget's agency, what was there.

Fig. 4.4 Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers. Bd. Kellermann. Paysage des Fortifications, 1913 (13th arr.)*

Fig. 4.5. Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers. Bd. Kellermann, 1913 (13th arr.).*

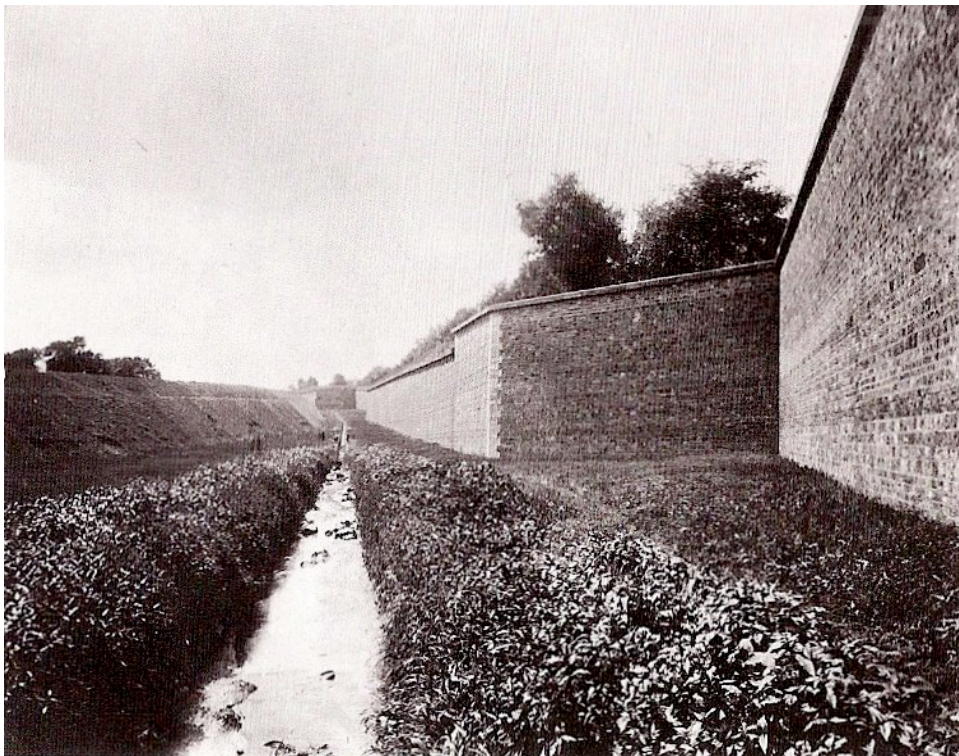Fig. 4.6. Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers, Bd. Kellermann,1913 (13ᵗʰ arr.).*

Fig. 4.7. Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers. Bd. Kellermann. Paysage des fortifications 1913 (13ᵗʰ arr.).*

Description: In Fig. 4.4, Atget has simply – and on the same visit as Fig. 4.3 – moved the camera up the escarpment to obtain some variation; the view swings to the left away from the tree slightly phased by light on the right, to open out to an area of glacis traversed by lines of trees with the carriageway just visible beyond. A large piece of litter, a paper bag, which could have been no more than four meters from the camera, is allowed to remain. Then another view along Boulevard Kellermann (more strongly lit but perhaps rather later in the day) is found at page twenty-one (Fig. 4.5). Although somewhat hidden in the early to middle section of the album, this photograph is very well resolved. The photograph of Poterne des Peupliers, Boulevard Kellermann, appears flat and overlit at first, but the open space and depth of field gives a very deep vanishing point; it brilliantly encapsulates the militarisation of space. The line of trees now extends in the easterly direction to meet the sun's rays raking powerfully across the whole image. The dissolve is at absolute middle but slightly phased out on the right and buttressed on the left by another tree lane alongside a narrow footpath. Two earthworks are sited to the left, one at mid-distance and the other much closer to the horizon. In the shaded area to the far right, the carriageway of Boulevard Kellerman is seen again between the tree rows.

This group along the carriageway culminates on page forty-seven where the space of the boulevard is open to such an extent it becomes reminiscent of one of Haussmann's avenues. The view (Fig. 4.6) is of Boulevard Kellermann again, this time looking east from the other side of the boulevard where there is a more shaded, but equally complex setting of the pathway at the side of the main carriageway. The photograph demonstrates very strong contrasts throughout with deep umber-black trees silhouetted in the foreground and a singular male figure seated in the bunkers over to the right in bright sunlight and seemingly unaware of the presence of the photographer. There is immediacy here, as if caught in a great flash of light spreading across the whole area from the right.

There is one other image of Boulevard Kellerman and this time Atget has gone over the bunkers to stand the camera astride a drainage ditch to take in a wide-angle view over the reed and lily beds of the trench. On the right the escarpment of the redoubt is visible and on the left the walls are shown with their angular alignments based on Vauban's bastion wall system. This echoes a number of other pictures where the walls are important as a buttress both in the composition of the photograph and in respect of the standard construction of the

Fortification walls. Thus the photograph taken of Boulevard Kellermann on page nineteen of the album (Fig. 4.7), compares with the photograph at Porte Dauphine on page twenty-four (Fig. 4.8). Clearly the photograph at Boulevard Kellerman over the drainage channel is made at a later time of day; the light is more stable, the definition of the picture sharp with stunning detail on the sedums planted alongside the stream. The wall is also clearly given in its structure as part of a system of spurs and angles to put as many obstacles to scaling as possible.

Reflection: What is curious is that the flooding of light where it absents or occludes part of the picture actually draws the attention toward that part. It is also by that action to render the rest of the photograph rather contingent to the gaze and a heightened sensation of vision. This again is not chance; it is a deliberate idea whereby Atget plays with the light to effect a cascade caused by the burning into the image, it is both a cinematic edit, like an establishing shot, as well as the impression made by light on the literal surface of the document as if to indicate the signing of the image by a phenomenon of nature. The light blast records the time of day that early morning sun low and both bright and diffuse as it evaporates the dew from the trees and the grassy banks. It is notable that on an expedition to the area, Atget's prints change directly in response to the time as gradually they become more defined the later in the morning he worked. The verdant foliage gives the sense of a garden and a subject that Atget pursued in other later projects. Again in the Porte Dauphine (Fig. 4.8) photograph the garden motif is becoming more active; the path and the disappearance into the dissolved early morning light dominate the setting. Here there is a different sense, perhaps of unease, of the oncoming presence of another wandering in the opposite direction, the possibility of a meeting.

It is unlikely that Atget encountered anyone on these early morning forays apart from the occasional lone figure who, on close inspection of the photograph, appears to wander into shot. What he did encounter though was the litter left behind by strollers and picnickers. The trash reflects on the kinds of accumulations that were photographed in the Chiffonier camps. This is paper litter from wrapped food and empty bottles. It appears that Atget did not take these photographs to show that litter was a problem. It is much more likely that he used it to show the presence of the people in the area, perhaps as an observation on the use of the area for leisure purposes. One thing the amount of litter does suggest is that Atget

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followed in its wake. No doubt the favourite day for a visit to the Fortifications was Monday and the photographs were taken mostly in the summer months.

Fig. 4.8. Eugène Atget: *Porte Dauphine. Fossés des fortification, 1913 (16th arr.).*

If the empty paths occasionally advance a sense of mystery insofar as they anticipate another person coming in the opposite direction, the paths are primarily registers to the condition of solitude. Atget never prearranged his sites, what was there had to be there as that was the function. The dropping or leaving of litter was a fact that gave specifity to the document. On page fifty-five of the album, this is borne out by an image inscribed, *Porte de Sevres Fortifications 1913 – 15 e arr.*, where a wide moat sits between the walls on the right and a grassy bank shows a scattering of litter on the left (Fig. 4.9).

Fig. 4.9. Eugène Atget: *Porte de Sevres. Fortification. 1913 (15ᵗʰ arr.).*

Description: It appears Atget arrived on a Monday in full awareness of what he would find as to detect the litter would characterise the document. The littered over space is what lends the document its 'documentation' in a way that is not possible with the lonely path shots. Litter in this sense then becomes another technical sign possessing a legibility that can be transferred to different spheres of use. Also, note here the reverse shot: Atget moves over the right of the walls and shoots the other way, more litter; a dark tonal mass in the reflection from the trees atop the wall and pasted in on page fifteen (Fig. 4.10).

Reflection: As the album pages turn there emerges the symmetry from front to back and in reverse. So that on page fifty-nine, *Porte Dauphine Fossés des Fortification 1913 – 16 e arr.* (Fig. 4.11) mirrors image on page two in the album, *Poterne des Peupliers La Bièvre – zone des Fortifications 1913 13 e arr*. (Fig. 4.12).

Fig. 4.10. Eugène Atget: *Porte de Sevres. Fortifications, 1913 ((15th arr.).*

Fig. 4.11. Eugène Atget: *Porte Dauphine. Fossés des fortifications, 1913 (16th arr.).*

Fig. 4.12. Eugène Atget: *Poterne des Peupliers. La Bièvre-Zone des fortifications.*

Description: A long avenue perspective (Fig. 4.11) is accompanied by deep masses of tone and light halation offset by detailed close up work on the ferns and greenery either side of the path. Again (Fig. 4.12) a central pathway or alley disappears into the far distance. The culvert of the Bièvre is set against quite superb close-up details of a nettle bed and other plants. The stream clearly captured in flow is a hazy, viscous cream that turns the deep tones a shade of dark maroon.

Reflection: A very interesting idea is beginning to emerge in the sense of a phenomenological 'percept', i.e. a meaning of 'place-sense' in, for example, the work of Marcel Proust. "Aesthetic figures and the style that creates them, have nothing to do with rhetoric. They are sensations: percepts and affects, landscapes and faces, visions and becomings." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2003) The photography of Atget is, in this context, perhaps for the first time in history lends itself to a palpable physical sensation by the block of tones set against pale carpet of the path. Phenomenological essence is given to colour and touch as the key moments of the immanent perceptibility of the space connoted, rather

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than denoted by the photographer. Correspondences of memory and recollection are inscribed in the sensations of the body by the percept of place borne out by broad masses against haptic, tangible details. These are highly physical images, but they accrue to the monument of the Fortifications through the sense of touch of the material, in particular the foliage and ground cover. As Deleuze and Guattari put it:

> "The monument does not actualize the virtual event but incorporates or embodies it: it gives it a body, a life, a universe. This was how Proust defined the art-monument by that life higher than the 'lived', by its qualitative differences, its universes that construct their own limits their distances and proximities, their constellations and the blocs of sensations they put into motion." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2003, p. 177)

In similar fashion Atget takes his own place in the becoming percept of photography; this place bears some further consideration. This can be exemplified by reference to two further images on pages twelve and forty-eight of the album respectively. These are two of the most unusual photographs in the entire sequence and precisely emplaced in the set – twelfth from the beginning and the twelfth from the end; *Porte Maillot Fossés des fortifications 1913 16 e arr.* (Fig. 4.13) and *Porte Dauphine Les fossés des fortifications 1913 16 e arr.* (Fig. 4.14).

Fig. 4.13. Eugène Atget: *Porte Maillot. Fossés des fortifications, 1913 (16th arr.).*

Description: Both these photographs are taken from very low camera angles. The film plane is aligned horizontally and the bellows extended to ensure very sharp focus on the immediate foreground. This allows for a phasing on the walls, which in both photographs, dissolve to dead centre infinity. What is noticeable here is the photography of the plants, the clump of reeds, nettles and bush at Porte Maillot and the long grass and brambles at Dauphine.

Reflection: There are two aims Atget has in mind here and they signify spaces absorbed in the natural matrix; one is the habitus of the plants as being within the trenches (fossés) of the fortifications as the site of natural taxonomy and natural history, and second, the brute fact that the ramparts are in need of upkeep if they are to operate efficiently as Fortifications. There is no doubt however in my view that the focussing on the plants was an intentional idea as will become clearer as the chapter proceeds. Thus the images are not only rhetorical but are also practical insofar as they suggest narratives outside of their immediate spaces touching upon the taxonomy of plants derived from Linnaeus and the journalistic requirements of the document. Both images, (but especially Fig. 4.14) demonstrate Atget's technique of directing the camera at the early morning sun and allowing light halations into the bellows.

Fig. 4.14. Eugène Atget: *Porte Dauphine – Les fossés des fortification, 1913 (16th arr.).*

This is not as simple a technique as it appears. The front of the camera has to anticipate the sun's rays as single beams and the aperture set accordingly (this involves careful calculation of stopping down) and then the front of the camera has to be tilted thus to encourage the vignetting, that eclipse that occurs toward the edges of the photograph sometimes pronounced by a single chamfered edge on one side at the upper corner of the photograph. The camera optics called 'vignetting' in Atget is intentional. It is a play on the use of the *vignette* as decorative and popular *motif* as well as being the phenomenon of occlusion that appears in the corners of the photograph. Quite why Atget made such use of it is hard to speculate; it is just possible that he saw it as a way to give his own photographs the historical timbre favoured by the archivists and also represented a commercial signature that he knew appealed to many of his clients. This reaches an apotheosis in the Fortifications.

These two photographs are poised between the undergrowth, its chaotic entanglement, and the overview, the task of each image to transmit information concerning the conditions of the Fortifications. The low camera angle goes down to a level very close the ground, as if Atget was seeing the world from the dog's eye. Now perhaps this dog is in ironic mimicry of some of the feral dogs that roamed the Fortifications and always a danger to the site photographer. But whatever the 'joke' it is a clever self-reference and acknowledgement that to be a photographer who 'doggedly' touts images to whosoever has use of them, one needs to keep close to the ground. If the *vignette* is Atget' percept it is achieved with a knowingness bordering on the melancholic tone of a minor key to suggest a reference contemporary with him: he is the Erik Satie of photography.

Atget the Kynic:

Atget the dog, the political animal, portrays himself by reference to the undergrowth in the shadow of the walls. It is a subversive trick, for it speaks a certain cynicism as resistance. It is not possible to discount that this was merely Atget's photo-instinct at work as he had developed the low camera angle over quite a few years. The technique is honed, highly wrought; there is nothing casual about it. The photographs suggest a fully conscious idea, a concept to add to the percept, that the Fortifications presented an opportunity to self-consciously play on the camera position by reference to a furtive soldiery, to become the

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invader or the spy. Atget grasps the opportunity to express himself as a dog, that is, as a cynic. At the same time the cynic understands the truth, dissembles the illusion and sniffs the bottom of it.

Peter Sloterdijk makes the distinction between the cynic who pursues self-interest and the 'kynic' who pursues an ironic cynicism and seeks out paradox and contradiction. (Sloterdijk, 1990) There is no question that Atget made use of such comparisons as the training as an actor would have surely supported that understanding of the content of French dramatic tradition and the neo-classical *mis en scenes* designed by Le Notre for the gardens of St. Cloud and romanticised in the courtly pastorals and fêtes of Watteau. The Fortifications series is, at root, a walk along a path, picking up the 'scent' as much as sense of place and searching out the possibility of spaces for reflection, perhaps not deliberately targeted at self questioning, but certainly in the sense of a search for the *populaire*, the people of the Republic. Sloterdijk sees the kynic as personified in the figure of Diogenes and perhaps the ideal classical figure for Atget, as he (Diogenes) also wandered around with a lamp in broad daylight in the hope of illumination. (Sloterdijk, 1990, p.165) What needs to be kept in mind here though is the discretion of Atget. Is it reasonable to describe him as a political animal in the role of the kynic? I think this can be borne out by what is known of his politics. The key point is that this politics, leftist and pacifist is given such a subtle inflection by the formal procedure, the very sense of ground, the love of plant life, even when low down gives language to the document.

To sum up: this is the Idea of Atget emerging in the context of the percept and its concept that could be furthered to Atget's universe in the way attributed to those of Debussy and Proust by Deleuze and Guattari. For here we encounter *vignettes* of such outstanding presentation as to enable a detailed study of the flora and fauna of the Fortifications if so desired. Atget's percept plies a delicate, almost intangible furrow between the militarised space and the biologist's garden.

Trees and the (Photographic) Allegory of Presence:
The flora of the Fortifications and not the litter is the more important subtext to the whole series. In this the tree form is the substance of the *vignette* as they form the dark tonal masses that lead off from the central *motifs*. Trees appear in virtually every photograph.

Whether they are planted or whether they are growing spontaneously they present a supplementary, allegorical content to the photographs. They appear twisted along the ground bent over to lean at angles to the embankments, or they stand up leaning as if in response to the sight of the huge walls. They also occur in avenues with the regularity of the military space, where they mark time in accordance with the marching of troops; and sometimes they are laid low almost horizontally before they emerge again in the sward as saplings shimmering in the breeze. Despite all this, the trees do not attest to an ideal of nature. They do not speak of the harmony or the innate wisdom of nature as redemption in the face of the function for which the Fortifications are designed.

Fig. 4.15. Eugène Atget: *Porte Dauphine. Fossés des Fortification. 1913 (16th arr.).*

The tree in the Fortifications is a *motif*, but not a theme. Neither is the tree a metaphor, or a representation of anything, for the kynic they fulfil the function of a cover, perhaps somewhere to relieve oneself but the tree does not mean anything, they only symbolise themselves. However, they are the contextual feature and this is how their allegory works by comparison to the wall as they give measure by their continuous presence and in their scale. The tree is functioning in the image through its capacity to describe the passing of

time. This is not to be confused with how trees 'function' in the romanticism of *plein air* painting, is not the metaphor of natural form, but is to aid the functioning of the photographic image, by an *analogous* form of similarity. The tree is a cipher or a sign that "shoulders knowledge" (Nesbit, 1994, p. 192) and it is then the abstraction of the Fortification even though in itself it does not carry any meaning other than to supply the figural element to the ground of the bastion wall.

The photographs of the Fortifications posit a meaning only by their metonymy of abstraction (another way of referring to the *vignette*), which is to establish precedence over the whole idea of the defensive shield as the image of the State. Possibly with Atget's background in theatre there is a sense of recall; that of the ramparts in Hamlet, but more likely the tragic play – Antigone perhaps – who is entombed in the walls of the city for her refusal to comply with the demands of the city. As in the *Zoniers*, Atget's series takes on something of the character of a singularity. Each image constellates a resonation with the pastoral rhythms of time recurring in French art and furthered by the use of angled perspective and light diffusion. The photographs signify, by the abstractions of the trees, a sense of a long lost past linking their role as *motifs* and markers to the diminutions of space in the vanishing point.

The trees mark the limits of places as arranged on eternally historical planes; a whole series of stages and plateaus. This gives both orientation and measure to the image and renders light fadeout itself as a quasi-rhetorical rather than technical sign. It is as if to suggest that the frequent use of light blast is the modality of the *vignette*, but not a comfortable one for it is, surely, also the oncoming catastrophe that is the allegory of the return of the future and not a history that is past. Not even the trees can resist the oncoming rush of progress and that this is intended to reflect a pact with the span of time that the trees have been in growth since 1871, that is they ceased to be cut back after then. The extent of the growth of the trees thus represents the equivalent passing of time and it is just possible that Atget believed this to be a commercial gambit appropriate for a product such as a textile design, for which his photographs were already in use as templates. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 58)

In the space between the city and the wall stands natural history entwined with photography because to the ability of the medium to record genus and types in a uniform way so they can be thus compared and ordered. Natural history has another conservative function for it

is the basis of the eternal allegory insofar as it exists in contradistinction to the burgeoning of rationalist formalism. (Owens, 1980, p. 71) Atget's photographs, even as they observe the ground rules of documentary photography, gesture in the direction of this allegory, as the possibility for natural history to be also the history of natural décor culminating in one of the best photographs in the album on page fifty-seven, the strange, blank perspective of the Fortifications at Porte Dauphine (Fig. 4.16).
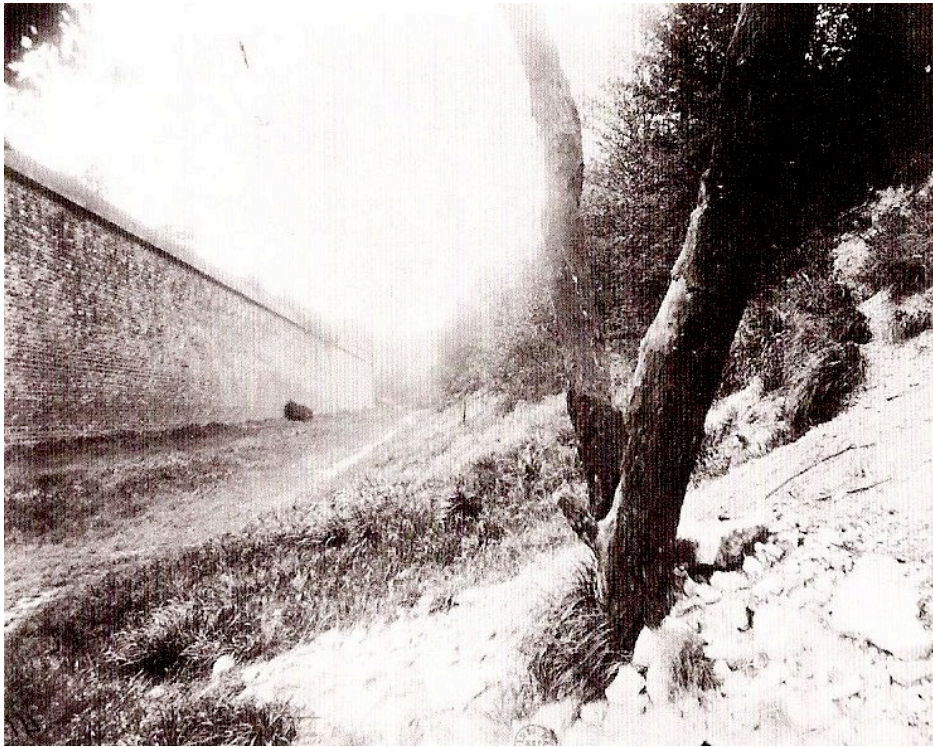
Fig. 4.16 Eugène Atget: *Porte Dauphine. Les Fortification,1913 (16th arr.).*

Emerging through the undergrowth, slipping along in the brambled gullies and amongst the leaning elms and willows, Atget's tree here become the *locus suspectus* of a conflict of law represented by the wall of the polis and the outside, the wild space of the outlaw represented allegorically, by the tree. In fact at this very moment the tree as a *motif* can be abandoned, as the photograph is manifestly not about the tree, but precisely the contrast between two spaces divided by a symbolic edifice. The photograph shows a foreground space of chalk rubble sloping down toward a path on the far left of the image. Some plants, aconites, bluebells and wild grasses, nestle around the edge of the white chalky area. The

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path too, is eroded down to the substrate, its white trail though faint, parallels the wall into the far distance where in a blaze of light haze it can just be seen to turn left to follow the line of the salient. The tree on the right, which teeters out of the chalk rubble, structures the foreground. It is bare of bark, dry and consisting of two separate forked trunks. One of the trunks holds fast the whole right hand side of the picture like a stanchion supporting some distant hawthorn bushes, whilst the other trunk disappears in the light haze toward the centre and the top of the photograph.

The wall is inscrutable; its great height and length exemplify the defences of the State. Small saplings appear on its crest growing like parasites on the back of a whale. A section of another tree (or possibly some leaves from the dead elm) fill out the top left corner, which then plummets into the hazy distance. The trees, notes Nesbit, "stood against the bastions, stubbornly, quietly occupying a cultural position without symbolising it" (Nesbit, 1992, p. 58) and that position, gathered in by the delicate intrusion of the trees into the immense surface of the city was, for her, 'pacifism'. The tree, for Nesbit, then lends the entire network its unified structure and to play the role of an eternal presence, the "essence of the fortifs." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 195) To suggest the unity of photography as an invention of nature transcends the naming of photography's essence *per se*. The question is whether essence be a product of the unity of science and nature as reflected in the natural history to which Atget wishes to give vent is a moot point. Thus the essence of the *Fortifications* is the tree as signifier of resistance and the plea for a belated justice for the Social Republic. This cannot be verified even though there is no doubt where Atget's personal sympathies might lie.

The reality, in my view, is more prosaic. Admittedly there are many trees, virtually in every shot, and many of them appear twisted and overgrown, but there are also many that are not natural trees, but civil ones like those Haussmann's gardener planted outside the Madeleine and in the Tuilieries. The value of the tree is that it is not only a tree but also a composite of administrative decision and gardening. Even the overgrown trees would be felled if the international situation had deteriorated. However, the assertion of the tree and the wall as a design feature or *motif*, as well as the lines of trees that speak of military order, leads to the provenance of the image commodity in Atget's work as intended to reach the commercial

market for the souvenir. "Atget certainly knew that archives made for markets; by the same token he knew that his documents were commodities." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 81)

For Allan Sekula, (Sekula, 2002, p. 445) the double meaning of the archive, both store and commercial image resource is placed between labour and capital. It becomes a question of ownership. Atget's archive is in this sense subtler. It takes in both history and politics but unites them under the carapace of the *vignettes*, the leaves and the trees the undergrowth and massive banks of plants that inform most of the photographs. These emblems, many of which were intended to strike a chord with the viewer's associations of French art with the decorative, which Atget identified in the landscape and amplified when edited into the album.

The commodity form of the photographs is present in the popular form of the cliché and exemplified by the souvenir imprint with a decorative border, such as can be found in commercial products. In one sense the analogue of production involves mostly trifling mementos that whilst enabling the advance of ballistics that rendered the Fortifications themselves as obsolete, was also to be found in the mass produced domestic object transiting values from instruments of war to representations of the most homely and sentimental kind under the same productive rubrics. Photographs, in this general process of industrial development, are commodities, but not simply in the sense that they will represent money-value even though this possibility was raised in chapter one of this study. With Atget on those walks around the paths and at the foot of the great bulwarks the commodity is also subtly given a political dimension insofar as the *vignette* represents the border of security for the seat of the Republic.

The analogy of the commodity is here translated to the screening of the space with the trappings of landscape but yet also the denial of landscape as a contemplative space. The photographs then conceal the contradiction between use value and exchange or surplus value by metaphorically hiding the contradiction of class interests amongst the public who use the Fortifications for leisure purposes. Again it is a question of space not as representation, but as imprinted cliché, its appeal to mass circulation and use. The 'plan' of these images as Nesbit calls it, and which I am choosing to call the *vignette*, is that element which discerns the commodity but announces it through specific differences of each image

in the set as a whole, "knowing that he (Atget) would be able to sell it for the kinds of visual structures he had established in the photograph." (Nesbit, 1992, p. 224)

Atget's picture-commodities conveyed by the Fortifications do not have an essence concealed behind them. There is nothing to penetrate beneath the surface of appearances. Thus on the question of the surface of the photographs; Atget's fascination with the monogram of the trees and undergrowth against the massive *apriori* of the walls, a spatial recession which moves back and forth before white-out in the light blast, is that which also reveals essence as it expresses both the signifier of historical meaning as unitary structure but in precisely the same surface.

The surface becomes the meaning, but only when a specific identity is embossed by the generic order of non-identity, highlighted by the humble *vignette* as a decorative sign softening the impassive wall. This is the gesture Atget identifies as the allegory cum signifier of the space of the Fortifications on the whole and forms a motif that organises the whole set of the tree images. This would also ensure that within the conservative, factual confines of bourgeois taste, the set would gain a lasting and recognisable significance as designs. Perhaps Atget surmised that they would be able to form an intuition of the pastoral history of the tree in the momentous context of the Republic, a clever gesture that all the political rhetoric is transposed to a 'true' image of a twisted tree.

In the Fortifications Atget's work reveals its ambitions as a screen or a series of screens (to think film screens would be too literal) whose allegory is nothing less than the reawakening of the filigree of history, in the classical manner and which Atget would have seen in abundance in the archives. The clichés imply an excess of form, twisted, bent over trees, resonating walls, dense chaotic undergrowth and the openings to the yawning sky filled with cascading light. Two lines of enquiry can be pursued here: the first to be followed below is that Atget's album is a kind of pattern book of the defenses of the city of Paris as a series of decorative *vignettes* folded back over the above, to stamp their imprint, and second, that this resulting commodity is a phenomena derived from within the actuality of a historical moment in the history of the Republic. It is this double meaning of the decorative and the political which establishes the unique achievement of the album's contents

Fortifications as Clichés of Natural (Political) History:

The cliché is the hackneyed, the sure-fire, the popular, the decorative and also the *imprimure* stamp by which the print is made. Atget exploits this doubling in the *Fortifications*. The photographs are very precise in terms of their distancing and this allows for the doubling over of the meaning chosen by the reader, either archivist or the consumer. The cliché is, as averred above, the commodity form of cultural memory. Thus the photographs are elegant convolutions of various types of model landscapes, each with reference to the others, each like a little aria to itself, picturesque to a degree, but also decorative, in the commercial sense that they could be reproduced as designs in various forms. This is not without a certain irony, probably unintentional, as the 'fortifications patterns' would also be the *enseingements* to the history of the Republic and in this context. It is hardly surprising that as designs the *vignettes* would have failed as a commercial proposition when the Republic was in bellicose mood as the chance to avenge themselves against the Germans presented itself. Atget's anachronism could even suggest a correlation between him and some of his contemporaries: Raymond Roussel, or the abovementioned Erik Satie, as if Atget is part of the alternative history of French art.

Benjamin writes of Baudelaire as just such an alternative, the reduction of an entire corpus of work to the monogram, in the history of French literature, to where Atget's albums could equally belong, the cliché was the ambition:

> "*Les Fleurs du mal* was the last lyric work that had a European repercussion; no later work penetrated beyond a more or less limited linguistic area. Added to this is the fact that Baudelaire expended his productive capacity almost entirely on this one work. And finally, it cannot be denied that some of his motifs […] render the possibility of lyric poetry questionable. These three facts define Baudelaire historically. They show that he imperturbably stuck to his cause and single–mindedly concentrated on his mission. He went so far as to claim as his goal 'the creation of a cliché'. In this he saw the condition of every future poet; he had a low opinion of those who were not up to it." (Benjamin, 1999, p. 188)

Presumably Baudelaire wanted his inscription in every space possible. This reads similar to Atget's own ambitions for the document. The cliché is the mark of equivalence of acceptance within a culture as imprinted there occurring everywhere; on dinner plates, on

walls, in embroidery, in the newspaper, in short the immediate mediation of the image as self-evidently belonging.

The clichéd *vignettes* that Atget pasted into the *Fortifications* album, work between archaeological and phenomenological models, in a similar way to what he carried out simultaneously in the *Zoniers*. As already noted this interchangeability provides the doubling of Atget's documentary use-value for his images; they can be taken as signs phenomenologically as imprints, or they can be used by the archaeologist to map out the traces in a location. It is the contradiction between these two modes, the ambiguity of their systems that Atget exploits. It lends a power to his document as a 'distributive form'. (Osborne, 2003)

The ability to distribute in the form of a unity suggests the contradiction inherent in unities as transcending a form of dissemination by the photographic image as having cause and effect at a level of visible contradictions of "dispersed light […] concentrated into a single focus". (Foucault, 1994, p. 150) Therefore, Osborne's idea is really one that accepts that unities are constellations of differences in and of themselves, which must be held in a unity precisely in order to conceal their own multiple contradictions. The photographic image is a socially communicative form, a system of intelligibility, which includes differences by offering a frame of reference. The unity of the photographic imprint could be seen as operating in the manner of Foucault's theory of the distribution of 'enunciative events' in the sense that the aforesaid distributive unities function to neutralise contradictions "throughout discourses as the principle of its historicity". (Foucault, 1994, p. 151) By the same token this surface of distribution, the very proliferation of everything photographable, appears as "closer to the origin, more firmly linked to its ultimate horizon." (Foucault, 1994, p. 121) Consequently it can be surmised that the enunciative image, via the theological 'calling' of a popular and ultimate horizon, is to found another more easily persuasive origin of intelligibility. Hence this paradoxically deeper imprint or cliché subtends the realising power of the image in the "evolution of mentalities." (Foucault, 1994, ibid.)

Taking Foucault's unity of contradiction and Osborne's distributive unity as essentially identical is to find common ground in the analogue cliché. It would mean that Atget's plans to market the *Fortifications* album was not without popular commercial sense. It would

also be to mean that the power of the document is admirably suited to the task of inculcating a sense of place by photographic souvenir. Thus the efficacy of the Fortifications album is not as a satire or even a critical tome against the Republic; rather it is to find the metaphor of the Republic in a space, which can be made to reflect across history by the elevated form of the cliché understood in the context of French art and literature. The photograph, as it introduces the spectacle of the commodity also provides the economic system of intelligibility from which the foundational images of a historical totality are drawn. "Such a concept of distributive unity […] would articulate the logical form of the historical unity of empirical forms - a way of grasping the insecurely bounded, because constantly shifting relational totalities of historical forms." (Osborne, 2003, p. 68)

If the value of the *Zoniers* photographs as a whole, is the way they insinuate the traditions of the picturesque representing a borderline existence that Atget perceived to epitomise modern space, so the work in the Fortifications follows a similar route. Even if topographically they run parallel to the Zoniers and on occasion support the habitations of the Chiffonier, their topological surface is very different. The model landscapes of the Fortifications when photographed appeared more like a parody of high art reduced to popular reproductions. It should be remembered here that the transferring of photographic images to ceramic surfaces by mass production was one of the first reasons to experiment with photographic technology in the laboratory of Thomas Wedgwood. (Batchen, 1999 p. 29) It cannot be overlooked that Atget may have thought the *vignettes* would make ideal clichés for imprints on china or placemats and even advertising. In my view, this extends beyond the document, not into the idea that photography is equivalent paper money (O'Brian, 1997, p. 80), but in the idea that photography *production* is the production of commodified perception operating on the base level to achieve superstructural, culturally reified and even ideological tropes. This production finds equivalence in the quasi-religious content of the *vignette*.

In the *Fortifications* album, Atget demonstrated the systemisation of the cliché as its function is to delve into the image identity of the national community. Thus, phenomenally incomprehensible concepts such as the national spirit are observable "only by the systems they differentiate as identical to the production of the systems operation." (Pottage, 1998, p. 3) The photographs as decorative, 'spiritual' emblems of the Republic then, demonstrate

the analogy to the image system of French history. This powerful effect, the knowledge of which Atget trailed behind him on those treks with the heavy camera, meant that the trips to the Fortifications provided the threshold for a move into a new kind of photography commodity, which he would take up post World War One. This was to synthesise the light-diffusion of the *vignette* with the political spirit of France. This commodity form would now be made even more apparent in the photographs of the garden pools in the former Royal Park of St. Cloud and in the shop-windows along Avenue des Gobelins. In the Fortifications, Atget had learnt to invest his photographs with authentic myths by extending what Nesbit has called the 'repertoire'. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 23) As Atget's album unfolds, so it assumes the form of a pattern book of *vignettes* whose entwining identifies the apparatus of photography with the national community.

The intuitive level of photography practiced by Atget is noteworthy insofar as the Fortifications 'commodity' is the revival of the national metaphor, at a time when the war Atget so disapproved of and did not support, was already incipient. The genius of this is the way in which Atget imparts this commodity in the filigree of the foliage and thus pictures history by the popular allegory of the decorative. What is at stake, I think, is the historicity of photography in and of itself, as an enlightened machine in its ability to recategorise the commodity by the analogue in whatever form or style it takes. The legacy of Atget is to pass down this attribute to photography: it is his cliché.

Adorno once remarked that photography in Paris had gone into steep decline "until its commercial exploitation by Atget". (Adorno, 1999, p. 56) This would mean that Atget's ruthless commercialism, his obduracy and scepticism of modernism, his tendency to dogma, even though he believed that the Social Republic had been betrayed by the State, he remained alert to the business of photography. For even as his approach was something of an actor's mask, it was manifestly not a matter of mere contingency that he was to produce some of the greatest of all photographs known in the history of the medium. (Lugon, 2007, p. 115)

Summary:
The answer to the question of the difference between the Fortifications as a military emplacement and the *Fortifications* as an album of photographs is precisely, popular

history. This is not the history of Empire carried out in the mid 19th century by Baldus and Marville, but rather the post-Commune legacy of the *populaire*. This is the knowledge of the Fortifications that the brute, physical topography is rendered into an elegiac cliché. *Zoniers* together with *Fortifications* equals resistance to the State by exclusion from it, but to be re-designated as the spaces of the people.

To reflect on Atget's images made during the run up to the First World War, is to encounter a struggle for the meaning, not only of Paris as a metropolis, but of the political Republic itself and to inevitably rake over the ashes of the Commune. The verdant mounds and tracts of the Fortifications are haunted by the events of 1870–1871, not because that was where the Commune stood, but because in its topography, the Fortifications represented the failure of the State to properly deal with the crisis.

Atget was a commercial photographer who sold his prints for one franc, or one franc twenty five, if he had to take public transport. This perhaps helps to account for his rather rude dismissal of the Surrealists, when Man Ray attempted to persuade Atget that his work was close to their art. It is not that Atget did not understand this interest, but that to recognise it would mean that he would have to confront the limit of his trade. This would be to surrender his principle of the document. Atget was a great photographer and well-respected in his day, acknowledged as he was by the libraries and museums. His knowledge of Paris, particularly those areas of the city about to be developed, was unrivalled, but his business-sense sometimes let him down. The plans to publish the albums for popular sale and widespread use never materialised and what he deposited with the Bibliothèque National were hand-made prototypes.

Throughout his career, Atget remained a solitary figure with few confidants. He was not an artist- photographer, like Man Ray, of whom he remained wary, even though the latter was one his clients. When he was approached to provide a photograph for a Surrealist magazine, only the personal intervention of Ray enabled the purchase to go ahead. On receiving the commission, Atget reiterated his mantra: "These are documents that I make." He subsequently proceeded to the sale of one of his photographs he had made during the solar eclipse of 1912 (Fig. 4.17). As he submitted his bill, which was much higher than for any other single photograph he sold, he remarked: "Do not put my name on it." The photograph duly appeared on the cover of *La Revolution Surrealiste*, the magazine edited by Andre

Breton, on the fifteenth June, 1926. With this image, of a group of bourgeoisie, looking though shaded eyes at the eclipse from the vantage point of the Place de Bastille, the 'society of the spectacle' arrives. Having been originated in the image of the *Fortifications*, the photograph, because of its depiction of the effect of something not identifiable in the image, seems to imply that from now on, reality will exist beyond the camera and always be the eclipse.

Fig. 4.17: Eugène Atget; *l'Eclipse – 17 avril 1912–Place de la Bastille.*
Note the 'eclipse' in the image itself, the *vignette* in the top left corner.

CHAPTER 5

Atget at Bercy: Part One

Introduction:

In the previous chapter I raised the possibility that Atget's passage through the Fortifications had made for an alliance with the historical conditions of photography by the cliché (imprint) of photography in the *vignette*. I have reconsidered Molly Nesbit's opinion that the *Fortifications* series had a fundamental political factor, by maintaining that the photographs (although novel in the use camera positions) were composed in such a way as to render them documents that sought to emulate "the *clarté* which is the highest virtue of the classic French tradition." (Szarkowski, 1982, p. 17) This led to a question of the ontological unity of the set of *Fortifications* photographs. I wanted to establish that Atget's photographs engaged historically with the space of the Fortification wilderness by a process of 'decorative' mirroring, the album reading like a sample of templates. I argued that the idea builds on an image of Atget as a photographer who, because of his theatrical background, expressed the significance of foliage contrasted against the huge Fortification bulwarks as producing a form of design. I have further suggested that this represented Atget's view of history, the popular *vignette*.

I have already referred to a group of photographs which I think were made together over one or possibly two consecutive days. They present a rather different view of the *vignette*, as they encountered a new kind of open space, the area of the Zoniers traversed by the railway tracks at Bercy. To arrive there, Atget took a path from the Porte d'Ivry that rises over the rough ground populated by the many Chiffonier camps he was also in the process of documenting. As he traveled from Porte d'Ivry and onto Boulevard Poniatowski, he was afforded a series of views in stark contrast to the camps below. It is my view that this series completes the circle of the Zoniers and does so by linking together an allegorical with a real topography.

I will put forward two approaches to these photographs: the first is based on empirical research of the site recreating the practical aspect of the group of photographs. This is part

one of the chapter. The second approach is a conceptual analysis of the set as a whole and includes a close investigation of one of the photographs. This is the second part of the chapter.

I am particularly interested in a series of five photographs, which together with nine others linked to them make an expanded series of fourteen photographs in total. Atget may not have intended this set, but nonetheless, it is both strongly suggested by the negative numbers and by the selection of views. I believe that the fourteen photographs constitute an extended set, which when interrogated and re-examined reveal surprising, and previously unrealised possibilities for Atget's 'philosophy' of photography. In the series, the singular photograph, which occupies the apex of the set, taken on the crest of the Boulevard Poniatowski, is the pivotal image which will be studied in some detail. It shows a pair of telegraph poles right in the middle of the photograph as a train passes by below. I have called this photograph 'the double poles'. What interests me here is the blunt placing of an obstruction to the view. I will speculate as to why these poles are placed this way in the photograph and attempt to come to a conclusion that Atget arrives at a 'phenomenology' of the poles and a radical ontology of photography.

Topography:

Bercy is an industrial area in the thirteenth *arrondissement*. It is traversed by the railway links into the Gare de Lyon and in Atget's day, was the site of large servicing and goods yards, still evidenced today. During the rapid expansion of railway building in the late 1840's, entrances, *portes*, were cut through the Fortifications in order to allow trains in and out of Paris. At Bercy the natural rise of an escarpment was utilised to accommodate a tunnel bored through the redoubts to allow trains access to the Gare de Lyon. At the same time, the wide meadows serviced by the Bièvre, a small stream that runs into Seine, became ideal sites for goods and storage yards that supplied the nearby tanneries and slaughterhouses. A terrace along the western edge of the escarpment carried another railway line. This was the line that encircled the city as the support line for the bastions. At Bercy, the Fortifications rise up above the general topography on the rampart of Boulevard Poniatowski. The Bercy sector of the zone was a desolate area where there were many Chiffonier camps and reclamation yards. As the yards sat in the glacis of the Fortifications,

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Atget would extend the work in the Chiffonier yards to other work that he included under the title, *Fortifications*. Going along on Boulevard Poniatowski until it eventually opens out on the Bercy rampart, which had been consolidated into a viaduct to allow the trains to pass, would have been a chance to draw breath. Here, there were expansive views of the topography as far as central Paris on one side and Château de Vincennes on the other. In addition, the great sweep of the railway tracks, as they passed right beneath the viaduct gave a sense of locus and drama. The space on Boulevard Poniatowski at this point presented the photographer with a sense of epiphany, as if suddenly encountering light, space and air after the deliquescence of the yards below.

The work conducted by Atget on the Eastern sector from Ivry up to Bercy was to encounter for the first time an open landscape. This was not a common factor in any of the photographs made in the Zoniers; to photograph there was to confront an enclosed space, consisting of walls and ditches. Atget had adapted his camera skills to this situation. He learnt how to keep his camera quite close to the ground which enabled him to work with scale and light in interesting ways to nuance and identify his style of document. This, as I have argued, permitted him to identify his 'percept', his cliché of history and place. Atget also revealed his knowledge of botany; the use of decorative borders, meadows of cress, sedum, rhododendrons and buddleias, as well as the variety of trees, permitted him to use the *vignette* as a commercial gambit to make his images popular representations in honour of the *populaire*. The open air afforded at Bercy, was not just that space which presents to a view, but also a site with wide horizontal space where there is no obvious locus, such as undergrowth, around which to organise the gaze. The space may have been blank and denuded, but the photographs at Bercy, however, did present a challenge in the expanses of pale sky suspended over the landscape.

Inventory:

Atget kept a consistent numbering system for his negatives even though he constantly changed the locations of photographs from one part of the archive to another. Reading these changes can present problems for the archivist or the researcher. However, the numerical system attached to the negatives remained largely reliable. By referring to the negative numbers, it has become possible to trace Atget's movements and to see how images were

made in sequence. There is no reason to believe that Atget's numbering of negatives would indicate anything other than their order of taking. Even if Atget changes his location, the order remains. On the whole, the groups of numbers cohere around sequences that conform to the series in which the images were made. Exceptions only occur when Atget interrupted one commission and going to another location; he still kept to the sequence of numbers, which he scratched into his negatives. The numbering of negatives provided by Atget, then, tends mostly to describe continuity of time.

The archiving and editing is a separate process from the numbering that occurs in the albums and indicated by the page on which the photograph appears. Here the order is based on similarities of images so that a certain kind of undergrowth, or a view down a stream, groups a certain number of negatives; in another sequence a certain type of distance attached to the view and so on. It can be safely assumed that this was the case because negative numbers in the files are consistent even as page numbers of the albums require images to be shown out of sequence. A negative would be given a number and when placed in the album, would keep that number even as it bore no significance to where it appeared in any album. This is the case with the *Fortifications* album where images are filed between negative number 100 and negative number 145, plus another fifteen. However, the images in the album do not follow that numerical sequence. Indeed, some of the sixty photographs in the album include photographs with negative numbers outside of the main group of numerically linked plates. Although it is difficult to pick out the designator of the sequence, the first number of a sequence, the logic is clear. Groups of photographs that make up the album are based on their similarity to each other and in this way achieve a kind of round-trip; a photographically illustrated map of the area.

I have discussed the structure of the editing of the images in the previous chapter as well as the topology suggested by Atget's sequences. Note that at the *Atget: Une Retrospective* exhibition at the Bibliothèque Nationale in 2007, (Aubenas and Gil, 2007) there is yet another numbering system applied to the images, the library's own archiving of the prints by Atget that they hold. This cataloguing contradicts the negative numbers originally scratched into the negative because the print numbers do not follow the logic of the negatives. In the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale numbering system, Go 45881 corresponds to negative number 115 and Go 45879 to negative number 116. The

cataloguing uses a slightly different numbering system and is not intended to change the enumeration of the negatives, but to indicate the location of each print as it is filed in the library. On this basis, I will proceed to refer to Atget's negative numbering system, and not the numbering of the archival prints used by the library. Finally, to resolve another point of difficulty, there are two dates associated with each of the images through the entire series. The first date, 1910 is the date when the photographs were taken, and the second date, 1913, the year they were made into the album. On the page numbers allocated to the albums by Atget, the Bercy photographs appear on pages five, sixteen, twenty-seven, twenty-nine and thirty-five, which is not anything like the sequence in which the photographs were taken; for that it is necessary to follow the numbers on the negatives.

For my purposes then, the album does not reveal the journey as it actually took place, but the editorial decisions for the sake of the book made after the fact by Atget. By referring to the negative numbers and not the page numbers, it would be possible to work out the order in which the photographs were taken and then build up a picture of the movements, and thus the importance of those particular sites, providing a more substantial base from which to interpret how the images were constructed and why. Taking an inventory of each image in turn, the page number refers to the page in the album, so Fig. 5.2 below, refers to page five in the album, but is negative number 115 and the final photograph in the Bercy sequence. The position numbers 1 to 5, relate to the map (Fig. 5.1), which shows the approximate position from where the photograph was taken. The numbers in brackets after the figure numbers in the inventory below relate to those numbers on the map as the positions from which the photographs were made.
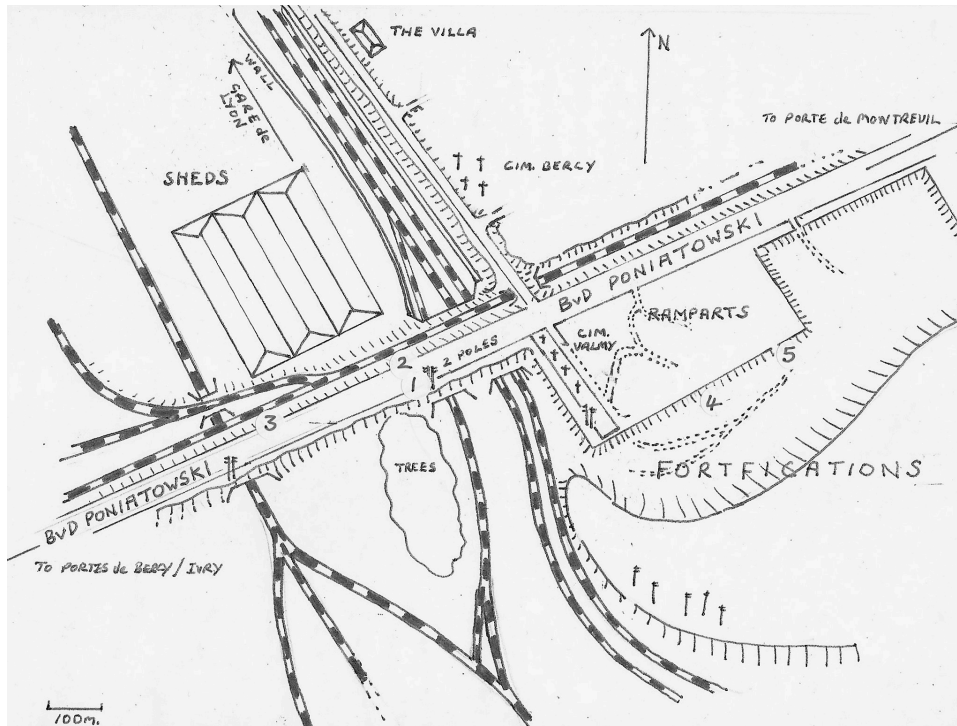
Fig. 5.1. Map showing the area of the Bercy viaduct and the positions numbers 1-5 from where Atget photographed.

Fig. 5.2. *Porte de Bercy. Fossés des fortifications. 1913. (12th arr.).*
Negative number: 119. (Position 5 on map)
Description: A sapling tree is seen against the high brick wall of the bulwark.
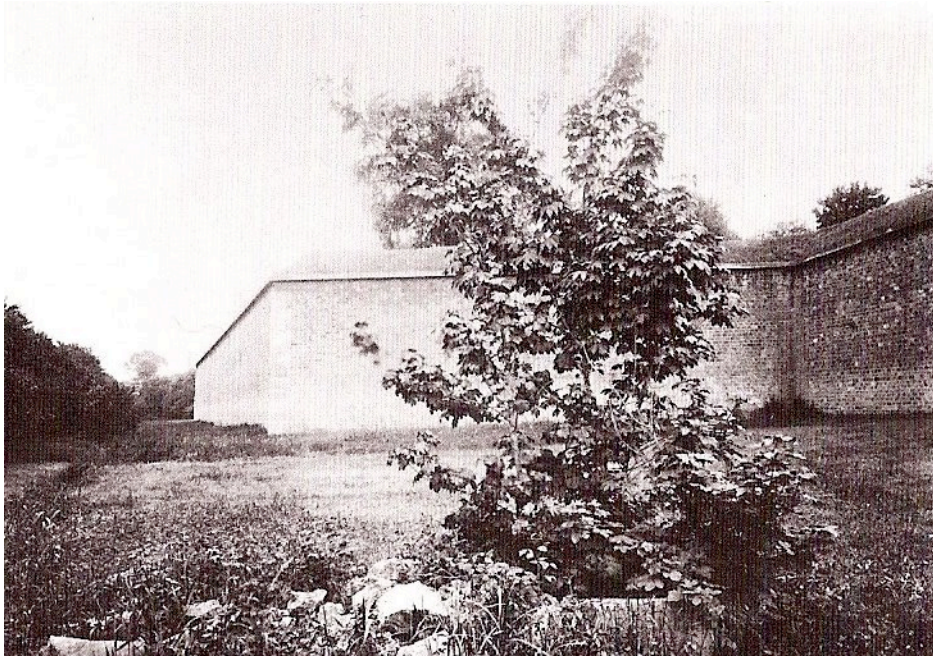
Fig. 5.3 *Porte de Bercy. Fossés de fortification, 1913 (12th arr.).*
Negative number: 118. (Position 4 on map).
Description: A sapling tree is seen in space in front of the Fortifs where the walls are angled to form a spur.

Fig. 5.4. *Porte de Bercy. Gare du P.L.M. sur les fortifications. Bd. Poniatowski, 1913 (12th arr.)*
Negative number: 116. (Position 2 on map).
Description: A view west toward the Gare de Lyon showing the goods yards and signals taken from the parapet edge.
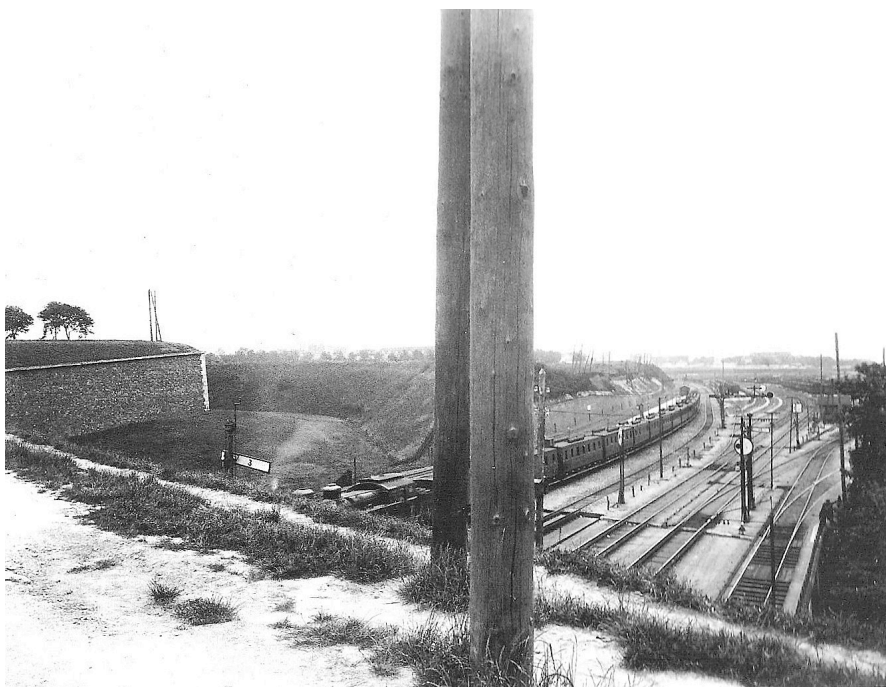
Fig. 5.5 *Porte de Bercy - Sortie de Paris du P.L.M. Bd. Poniatowski,1913 (12th arr.).*
Negative number: 115. (Position 1 on map).
Description: The 'double pole' photograph looking due north–east over the railway
lines to the landscape beyond.
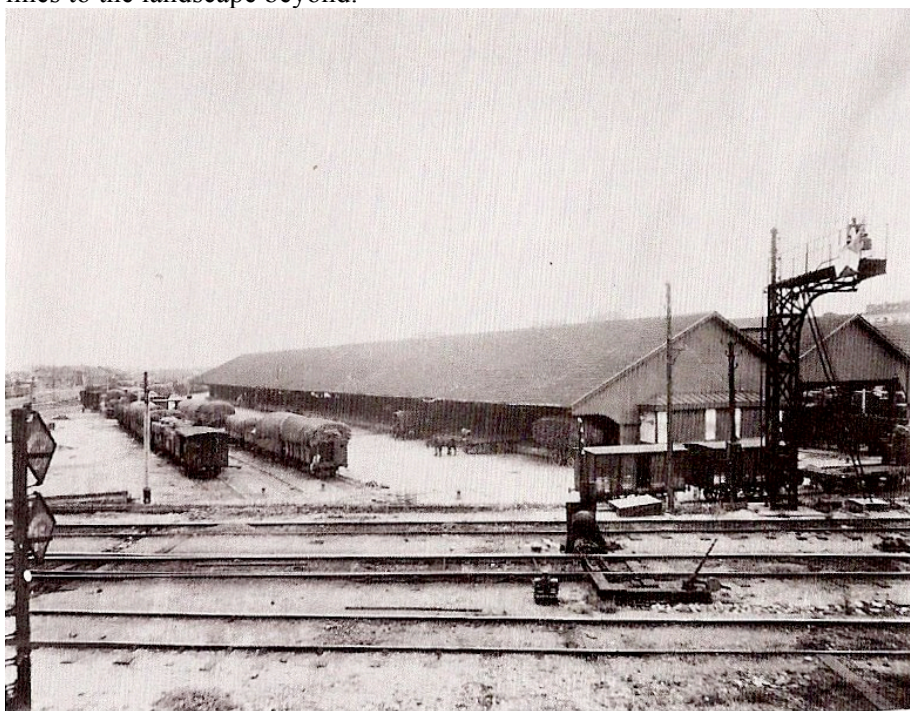

Fig. 5.6. *Porte de Bercy. Gare du P.L.M. sur les fortifications, Bd. Poniatowski,
1913 (12th arr.).*
Negative number: 117. (Position 3 on map).
Description: A second photograph looking toward the Gare de Lyon showing the goods sheds and
their yards. Note the bent over figure of a man inspecting a drain to the lower left of centre.

Situation:

The most obvious feature is that the images are displayed in the album in reverse order. If the numbering is consistent (and we must assume that it is) the last photograph made on that day is the first one encountered in this series in the album. Another way to map the path taken by the photographer is to consider the route he would have taken if he approached Bercy from the Porte d'Ivry and not from Avenue de la Porte de Charenton. This is the route suggested by the negative numbering sequence. Atget would have begun the sequence at the first stop he made right on the crest of the viaduct and looking due north east over rail lines heading out of the city (position 1 on the map, Fig. 5.1 above).

It would then seem that Atget simply reversed his position, crossed the street and directed the camera over the other side looking toward Paris and captured an image of the signalling stanchions and goods sheds already referred to. This is borne out by the fact that the distance between the two different camera positions though on opposite sides, are almost level with each other (position 2 on the map). The map also indicates the wide angle of view of Atget's camera as it segments the area as far as the villa marked on the map and also includes the sheds on the left. This villa is a key marker whose importance will become clear.

After exposing these plates we can safely surmise that Atget moves further back along Poniatowski toward Porte de Ivry, retracing his path, but on the other side of the boulevard. Here he exposes another plate over the levels of shunting lines toward the warehouses (position 3 on the map). Notice here that the same villa is also included in this view. The wide angle of view, now more acute to include the yards in three quarter fashion, describes a parallax shift as the villa is now seen again, but from a more oblique angle and at a greater distance. Finally, Atget moves again, this time due northeast on the boulevard and past the sites of his first two images and thence onto the ramparts themselves at Porte de Charenton (positions 4 and 5 on the map). Here he would have had to depart the road and clamber down the slope from the crest of the bulwark and then find a path into the *enceinte*. Presumably, he then followed one of the paths etched out by walkers and would have singled out the saplings for what are the final two photographs on the journey.

These last two photographs, where Atget has come down from the parapet and into the bowl, *enceinte*, of the Fortifications, would appear, at first sight, to be less interesting than

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the ones where the yards appear and the topography is more open. With the shots made inside the Fortifications there is a different space as the walls restrict the view beyond. In contrast to the parapet there is the feeling of enclosure by the high ramparts and now the saplings become the main focus of attention.

As metaphors, the outgrowth of trees would attest to the 'natural' state of the *enceinte*, and so play on ideas of mortality and change, in the cliché discussed in chapter four. Whilst it could be asserted that this idea is consequently, somewhat overly symbolic, it has to be remarked as to how Atget's saplings actually also fulfil the documentary function. They are the most architectural photographs of the Bercy series insofar as they show context and form, detail the building technique of the rampart and show the layout of the topography, offering stark evidence of its condition.

The Enceinte Ditch:

Both of the photographs made in the dry moats are quite complex images insofar as they show the contradiction between nature and Man and reveal the droll attitude, already encountered elsewhere in the Fortifications. The kynic, the dog-like low angle, here emphasises the enclosure by the walls of the sapling tree. Such an *enceinte* would have been well known to Atget with his military training. Hence Atget's two saplings are 'embryonic' trees enclosed by the great 'womb' of the defences, and as far as an archivist or historian would be concerned, offer a positive image of the fortifications as the heralds of hope. However, this might simply be a bit satirical, as knowledge of the military use of the word *enceinte* also, in medical terms means 'pregnant'.

It is as both commentary and knowledge which, I suspect, would appeal to Atget as a ruse to puzzle the archivist. The Fortifications were sites of assignations for the local population and presumably also sites of 'conception', thus retaining the 'social' documentary function, in the 'technical' sign of the 'baby-tree'. No doubt, all this would have played out to symbolically fuse and simultaneously cut the connection of the zone to the militarisation of space, but which owing to its deserted yet strangely private spaces, becomes a place for illicit sex. Atget would seem to have enjoyed the paradox of the city's defences as belonging to those dispossessed citizens in whose name supposedly the Fortifications stood, in contrast to the official archivist who would not necessarily read the connection.

Perhaps a little joke or a play on meanings that relate to the military strategy that Atget considered incompetent in the light of the Dreyfus affair discussed in the previous chapters, as much as to a botanical condition, to which as is clear from any of the Fortifications images Atget was sensitive. So, it is not a question that the 'signals' photograph or the great 'double pole' images are of any less significance because of Atget's selection of sites within the Fortifications. These photographs are significant for different reasons.

Place and Movement:

What can be concluded from this inventory is an ambulatory and topological shape of movement in the process of deciding about a position from which to photograph, but that the general direction of the movement is in a north-easterly direction. This has already been referred to in the *Zoniers* series. Movement from place to place, including small even minute shifts in angle and perspective, could be considered as research, a mode of enquiry and investigation. However, the walking in one direction also suggests an engagement with space regardless of geographical factors. The searching is a complex process, as Atget's travel was not where he felt comfortable, but from where the best most inclusive and informative views could be made. Therefore, it can be surmised that as Atget moves across the parapet and back again, he is already in place with the camera at the ready, and therefore expecting to encounter something. If referring to the negative number in the inventory is the photograph which precedes the first one made on the parapet, it is safe to assume Atget would have moved on up to the parapet on the left hand pavement. This is the view looking back down Masséna of three chiffoniers at the entrance to their yard; negative number 114, *Porte d'Ivry, Blvd. Masséna* (Fig. 5.9).

As he proceeds on the left-hand pavement, he would have had to cross the road to get the view over the incoming train and the landscape. This suggests that, either he was headed up there to do that anyway, or that by chance hearing the train he crossed the street set up the camera quite quickly and photographed as the train awaited its signal. The idea of Atget moving quickly, hoisting the huge camera up from the cart and simply triggering the shutter is problematic. He did not do 'snapshots' and preferred to spend time with the camera set up as many of the photographs Atget made of cafés where customers or waiters would often come to the door to observe the photographer at work, thus implying that he would

spend some time setting up. This deliberation is also clear from the above image of the saplings (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3). Atget's thinking composed these pictures in the camera and the assumption is that he had already planned where he was going on the day. The excursion was thus considered, perhaps not in detail, but as a general direction of movement. In all probability, the area had reconnaissance, either from the map, or from other occasions when he had visited the Chiffonier camps around Ivry and Masséna before the Bercy expedition. It is highly likely that the photographs made in the vicinity could have involved exposing as many as twenty or so plates in one day. It is even possible that Atget may have timed the photograph to coincide with the arrival of the train. In either instance – for it is equally possible he waited several minutes or longer for it to arrive – the fascination with that particular viewpoint seems self-evident. The view was to present the 'encounter' with an anticipated event (the arrival of a train) as if then part of a topography synchronised to the appearance of the train.

Site Visit:

In June 2008, I stood on the Boulevard Poniatowski escarpment overlooking the yards of the main rail route into and out of Paris and tried to work out the exact positions from where Atget made the photographs. My aim was to photograph the three images Atget made from the parapet. On the carriageway, for that is what the viaduct has now become – a concrete bridge with a number of openings for rail traffic and high retaining walls – it was very difficult (even allowing for the different types of camera used) to try and angle oneself to take any photographs remotely similar to those made by Atget. In the three locations on the viaduct, and with photocopies of the ones Atget did as a guide, it was impossible to obtain the sight lines. All kinds of obstructions got in the way from high fences around new building sites to billboards advertising supermarkets and a wall which you could peer over, but was impossible to get my camera into the right position upon with out risking serious injury.

For efficiency of transport, I had arrived at the opposite end to where Atget would have approached. He arrived from Boulevard Masséna and made his way due north from there. I had arrived by Metro at Porte de Charenton and then proceeded on foot to the viaduct that carries Poniatowski across the railway lines and toward Ivry to the south. There I spent a

good hour trying to work out from where the photographs were taken. Referring to the photographs by Atget, it became clear that whilst impossible to frame a similar view it was possible to identify if not the exact spot, a rough estimate from where Atget's Bercy photographs were taken.

For ease of calculation, I looked first towards Gare de Lyon and considered the two photographs that Atget made there. These are the photographs which show the stanchions and signalling in one and in the other, the warehouses (Figs. 5.4 and 5.6 above). This was made easier as the railway that once supplied the bastions is still in existence. Achieving the right elevation was impossible; it was as if some height had been shaved off the boulevard. Either that or my camera, a Fuji 6 x 9, was very different in lens optics and, of course, had a fixed lens unlike Atget's view camera, which had moveable front and back standards. However, it did help me to establish that Atget in all probability used a 90 mm wide-angle lens to make these photographs. The photograph I took attempted to reproduce the stanchion photograph (Fig. 5.4) and still retains a general topographical similarity (Fig. 5.7 below).

Fig. 5.7. View from Blvd. Poniatowski due west, June 2008 (Photo: author).

The small railway still occupies a low terrace a few meters below the crest now supporting two rail tracks oriented to the due north/south axis of the boulevard. From judging the relation of this terrace to the general topographical layout it was just about possible to make some comparison with where Atget had placed his tripod. Another consistent feature of the western aspect is the villa, which appears on the far right of the Atget image. The villa has been replaced with apartment blocks, but the promontory where it stood is clearly visible if now somewhat elevated on the rise of Avenue Charenton. By keeping the sight of the villa in view, I tried to locate where Atget had made his view of the warehouses (Fig. 5.6), but this proved impossible. Now the area is completely given over to a *Zone Industriel* with a complex of barriers and fences, although just beyond the new high-tech warehouses and refrigerated storage facilities, an occasional glimpse of an older building could be seen, which could be the low loading platforms in Atget's photograph. Casting my gaze over to the right, where I had just photographed a new automated storage shed which stands rather aggressively near the centre of the image (Fig. 5.7), I noticed that the overhanging roof is retained in the new building, and it would appear the function of the building is the same as when Atget photographed it.

The real changes to the area can be seen in the widening and deepening of the rail tracks as they cruise along the lower level under the small cross route and bend to the left for their entry into Gare de Lyon. These lines are now for the use of electric powered high speed SNCF trains. If an example of how the topography changes by technology was needed this was it, and it did occur that one unerring fact be imputed to Atget: he always photographed that which was about to disappear. This was a situation quite unlike anything Atget would have envisioned, the complete technologisation of the landscape. I have already noted that Atget had the unerring ability to arrive just before the 'end', to record the trace while it is still physically linked to an object, but in essence has already departed. This is the very metaphor of photography as captured by Atget and it is reflected in my own photographs, even though I was unable to repeat what Atget had seen.

The appearance of the technical environment was particularly apparent when turning to face in the other direction to the west, even though I was once again struck by the general similarity of the topography. The space below is still shaped by the curved embankment whilst there are no similarities in terms of detail. The topography remains partly intact even

if the Periphique obliterates almost any trace of the dry moats and redoubts of the Fortifications themselves. The telegraph poles of Atget's photograph, the double poles, also have gone. In the last twenty or so years, with increasing commercial activities along the Periphique, the supply of power has augmented itself to the appearance of new industrial installations and the nearby Centre Commerciale. The way that power supplies and over head wires in general tension the topography by applying a drawing over it are becoming obsolete. I held the camera over the wall and took a photograph (Fig. 5.8 below).

Fig. 5.8. View from Blvd Poniatowski due east, June, 2008 (Photo: author)

The rail lines themselves, however, do bear a slight similarity to the ones in the Atget photograph especially over on the far right where some shunting lines appear to follow the general layout in the Atget. But the great curve over which Atget's camera appears to have control has gone. This has been affected by the needs of the railway on one hand and the Periphique on the other. Now the lines go much further into the distance before they make their curve. This can be gauged by the proximity of Valmy Cemetery over to the far left, which has also been expanded since Atget's time. In the Atget photograph, the cemetery wall is announced by telegraph poles over on the crest quite close to the rampart. In my

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image above the cemetery now juts right over the rail lines and their escarpment of brick arches supporting the steep bank. The great tension of Atget's picture cannot be conjured any more in the alignment toward the horizon, but the small copse which nestled just to the right of the double poles in the Atget photograph (Fig. 5.5) has gone and is now the site of shunting buffers that contain 'out of service' trains. The number of lines has also increased significantly as more have been added to the network as the suburban areas have expanded. However, Atget does not depict the Boulevard itself in any of the photographs; there is no view along it, no intimation at a general aspect, or an attempt to conjure a sense of place. When Atget was there, Poniatowski was part of an inner ring road which like the tracks below encircled the city and connected the bastions of the Fortifications, a rough dusty *carrefour* lacking in proper sidewalks. It is well known that the area just to the south was not a place frequented by respectable Parisians, particularly Boulevard Masséna, which still connects to Poniatowski. Masséna, as has already been noted, was a notorious avenue occupied by Chiffonier yards and along which were scattered the many temporary huts that provided shelter for itinerants who survived on the city's detritus.

For half of its 1.7 kilometres, Boulevard Poniatowski passes over and through the modern sites of the Zone Industriel de Bercy. Even heading north-east there is not much to speak of by way of habitation or even, rarely for Paris, any restaurant or hotel before the road concludes at Porte Dorée. Most of its aspect, once you have passed over the yards, is taken up on the right, with a small park (the only area where the Fortifications reappear in the footpaths that meander across) and the Leo Lagrange sports centre. It is actually a very nondescript road in a seemingly dull part of the city and Atget's photographs do not suggest that even back in 1910 it was any different. Poniatowski is not, nor ever was, one of the celebrated thoroughfares of Paris, being always conduit that passes traffic between Porte d'Ivry and Porte de Vincennes.

Atget's encounters en route, given by sequential modes, are also able to unlock the unquiet sites of the city. As I discovered for myself, they can no longer be captured by the techniques that Atget employed. However, there is the example of the work undertaken by Daniel Quesnay (Quesnay, 2001) when he went to the former royal parks of Sceaux, St. Cloud and Versailles, equipped with a camera of the same specification as Atget's and made a whole series of exact views. What occurs in the Quesnay project is that it simply

shows the impossibility of retracing Atget as Quesnay cannot recreate the effect of the limpid early morning light that Atget exploited. Quesnay's work is an interesting exercise, but does not really tell us anything new about Atget. What this work does show is that the light is different now; harder, brighter more 'commercialised' and reflected off the dazzle graphics of tourist buses. Of course, Quesnay could not do the same in the Zoniers, as they no longer exist.

The Expanded Set: From Ivry to Bercy:

When the photographs that Atget made at Bercy, and which I suggest are a key set of photographs, is extended to include the ones that immediately precede them, the number of the set rises to fourteen. Now it would include some of the photographs from the *Zoniers* album. Atget apportioned images to each album dependent upon the criteria of the subject photographed. If a Chiffonier camp appeared anywhere in the shot: *Zoniers*; if it was primarily landscape: *Fortifications*. However, there are exceptions to this rule and overlaps between the two albums. In my expanded edition of the fourteen photographs, these overlaps and exceptions are gathered together.

Of the additional images, the negative numbers indicate that the photographs were all made on the way from Ivry to Bercy, on or adjacent to Boulevard Masséna. Thus it is possible to establish an edition of photographs describing a particular topography existing between the Porte d'Ivry and Porte de Montreuil. The negative numbers forcefully suggest this sequence as a discrete group. The Ivry photographs are numbered up to 112. Next comes number 113, (*Porte d'Italie, Bd. Kellerman; Bastion 87*), made before a final Ivry image, referred variously as *Un Coin de Boulevard Masséna 18 et 20*, or *Porte d'Ivry Boulevard Masséna 18 et 20*, which I have named as the 'three Chiffoniers' below (Fig. 5.9). The five Bercy images are followed by another series made at Montreuil and numbered 120 to 123, none of which appeared in the album.

The Boulevard Masséna photograph referred to above deserves special mention. It shows a group of three men middle-distance and casually standing outside a fenced yard on a bridged walkway. On close inspection they are wearing double-breasted working jackets and are undoubtedly Chiffoniers returning from an early morning round. Their trap stands on the far left of the photograph. Given that wagons were the favoured means of collection

for the Chiffoniers, it is perhaps that these men with their confident postures were gang-masters. The yard they were about to enter is the one entitled *Campement de Chiffoniers, Blvd. Masséna*, (Fig. 5.10) where Atget himself had stood on the same walkway to photograph upward of Masséna toward Bercy and which he chose to include in the *Zoniers* album.

Fig. 5.9. Eugène Atget: *Porte d'Ivry. Blvd. Masséna 18 et 20.*

The negative is numbered at 114 and featured on page twenty-five of the *Fortifications* album.

Fig. 5.10. Eugène Atget: *Campement de Chiffoniers, Blvd. Masséna.*

The negative numbered 110 and the actual photograph is on page fifty-three of the *Zoniers* album.

It is then quite clear that the photograph (Fig. 5.10) was included, appropriately, in the *Zoniers* album, but the 'three Chiffoniers' photograph was included in the *Fortifications*. I believe that Atget took the two photographs on the same day even though the negative numbers are not sequential. In Molly Nesbit's inventory (Nesbit, 1992, p. 288), the sequence is covered by no fewer than five negatives (107-111) given the same title: *Porte d'Ivry Boulevard Masséna 18 et 20 13th arr. 1910*. Indeed, in the *Zoniers* album, the photograph in question (Fig. 5.10) is referred to as *Campement de chiffoniers, Boulevard Massena, 13th arr, 1913*. This bears out my assertion that Atget occasionally reorganised the negative numbers in relation to the division between the two albums. This explains the sequence of movement; Atget had moved from the walkway of the Chiffonier camp, Zoniers, where he looked toward Bercy, taking photograph Fig. 5.10 as he did so. Then he stepped down from the walkway and moved on up the boulevard of the Fortifications before turning back to capture the three Chiffoniers, who had just arrived and were about to enter their yard. Atget is very precise about the distinction of the two photographs, although very similar, are part of the two separate albums. Thus the fourteen photographs in my scheme are reunited into the spatial context of their making.

It is also highly likely that earlier that morning Atget had taken a number of photographs in the camp itself. This much can be surmised: the conditions were cold, early spring, March or April and the trees just coming into leaf. The light is diffusing over the camp, precisely the conditions Atget had made use of when photographing the *Intérieur d'un Chiffonier Boulevard Masséna, 1912 (13 arr.) Porte d'Ivry*, discussed in the previous chapter, but here also included in my selection of the fourteen, where it appears as negative number 112. This particular photograph, like the one discussed above, has a different title than in the *Zoniers* album where it appears on page nine. In addition, the date is confusing as it is stated as 1912 and all the other images in the sequence are 1910. Indeed, 1910 is the date on the Nesbit's inventory and suggests that even as the negative numbers which Atget had scratched into his negatives remain reliable, even though sometimes dates become adapted from the time when the photograph was taken to the time when it was selected for the album. This suggests that Atget saw the editing process as the same value as the actual photography. Whatever the case, the *Interieur* (Fig. 3.6) is one of the photographs included in the expanded sequence that culminates in the Bercy group.

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The sets of *Fortifications* and *Zoniers* when seen in this expanded sequence open out to a much broader thematic with the addition of these other photographs. There is even the thought that the whole set were a sequence in terms of the time of their making, beginning in the Chiffonier yards and traveling the way up to the Bercy viaduct. However, the appearance of negative number 113, *Fortifications, Bastion 87, Blvd. Kellerman, Port d'Italie, 13 arr. 1910*, would seem to disturb the pattern of events that I have described. This is possibly due to Atget taking the *Interieur*, negative number 112, on the previous day and when resuming work the following day, the path from his apartment took him past Bastion 87 on his return to the Chiffonier camp. Whatever the actual events of the photographs were, it matters little and does not interrupt the overall cohesion of the set. This now gives the following group determined by their negative numbers in the inventory. (The list below indicates the number position 1-14 in the set, followed by the negative number in Atget's archive, then the actual album, either *Fortifications* or *Zoniers*, and finally the title and date of the photograph.)

1. 106; Fortifications: Impasse Masséna 18 et 20, sur les fortifications 13 arr. 1910.
2. 107; Zoniers: Porte d'Ivry, Zoniers, 13 arr. 1910.
3. 108; Zoniers: Porte d'Ivry, Blvd. Masséna, chiffoniers, 1910.
4. 109; Zoniers: Chiffonier, Porte d'Ivry, 13 arr. 1910
5. 110; Zoniers: Campement de chiffoniers, Blvd. Masséna, 13 arr. 1910.
6. 111; Zoniers: Chiffonier, Blvd. Masséna, 1910.
7. 112; Zoniers: Interieur d'un chiffonier Blvd. Masséna, Porte d'Ivry, 1910.
8. 113; Fortifications: Fortifications. Bastion 87, Blvd. Kellerman, Port d'Italie, 13 arr. 1910.
9. 114; Fortifications: Blvd. Masséna 18–20. Fortifications, 13 arr. 1910, a.k.a "Au Coin de Blvd. Masséna, 18–20, Porte d'Ivry, 13 arr." 1910.
10. 115; Fortifications: Porte de Bercy – Sortie de Paris du P.L.M. Blvd. Poniatowski, 12 arr. 1910.
11. 116; Fortifications: Porte de Bercy. Gare de P.L.M. sur les fortifications, 12 arr. 1910.

12. 117; Fortifications: Porte de Bercy. Gare du P.L.M. sur les fortifications Blvd. Poniatowski, 1910.

13. 118; Fortifications: Porte de Bercy. Fossés des fortifications, 16 arr. 1910.

14. 119; Fortifications: Porte de Bercy. Fossés des fortifications, 16 arr. 1910.

Eschatology of the Expanded Set:

It has to be noted here that although it is impossible to state with any certainty the degree of control Atget brought to the taking of these photographs in the number sequence, I am suggesting that he had an intuition and a liking for numbers as ciphers through which he catalogued and archived his work. The cataloguing presents the possibility of a subversive meaning in the series and indicates that Atget would be aware of the significance of his number sets which in this case would point to two possibilities:

a) The photograph constitute a general set of which the Bercy parapet images are a specific subset and/or,

b) That the numbers record the proximity to each other in so far as they were taken on the same day, or possibly over two days.

For Atget the needs of the album transcended the set. Thus, the edited album was a crucial aspect of his work. It was the end product and he would have had no compunction in breaking up and reintegrating the sets in order to supply the albums with their structure. This gives an important insight for the expanded set. As already stated, Atget proceeded in a generally north-easterly direction from the Porte d'Ivry. When he reached the *Fossés*, the ditches of the last two photographs, the sequence ends. It does not continue to Montreuil because the topography changes. Montreuil is also a good kilometre from the Bercy viaduct with a less defined area in between, where the Fortifications disappear into the Bois de Vincennes.

Now working with a series of fourteen photographs, of which three or possibly four are pivotal to the series as a whole, it is tempting to suggest these fourteen images as fourteen stages, or stations, or plateaus on a journey. In this, I am referring to the Fourteen Stations of the Cross, the number of times Christ paused for rest on the journey to his crucifixion on the hill of Golgotha. There is no hard evidence for this, and no other author has suggested

it. However, there is more to this assertion that can be made without in any way suggesting that Atget had a sudden sense of religious duty. It does not rule out that on those long expeditions certain analogies did not occur to him. This is more likely than that he was overcome by a spiritual becoming on the road, although at the same time, this cannot be ruled out. I have shown that Atget realised an image of the people in the cliché and the *vignette*. It is reasonable to suggest that he must also have privileged himself in the understanding of a certain piety amongst the French working class. The journey of these images inherently has a quasi-theological dimension which I have touched upon in the previous two chapters. It is this that now reaches its apotheosis in the double poles image that can be taken as the *Calvaire*. There is no question in my view, that for a Frenchman of even dubious religious observance, these tableaux represent not just the suffering of Christ, but also the *patrimonie*, the belief in the transcendence of the French State over and above the Social Republic, which itself eschews religion. Atget recognises that the State is thus based in metaphors of biblical eternities.

The Fourteen Stations is one story of the becoming narrative of photography, insofar as photography is iconicity based on the science of geometrical tropism drawn like a magnet to fundamental 'theological' traits in western forms of representation. (de Certeau, 1988, p. 69) The walk up Bercy then was analogous to the Via Dolorosa as such images are repeated in thousands of popular icons and in the metaphors of all travel and journeys aligning movement with the transcendence of life itself as a journey. In more prosaic terms, space is transformed by place. One senses here that Atget is highly vulnerable to the 'gaze' as he is exposed on a ledge above an industrial area. It is an existential void he stands over. Even if the number (fourteen) of photographs may just be pure chance, it nonetheless lends an inescapable eschatological dimension to these images. Bercy becomes the site of a final reckoning, a passion play, a tragic drama and what's more, is taking place in the badlands of the Zoniers. An eschatological 'hermeneutics' is suggested by those fourteen images whose topography is exactly a composite of the kind of landscapes that Atget would have known in the works of Breughel or Jacques Callot. These paintings and etchings, with their apparatuses of execution permanently erected on prominent sites, which are nonetheless uncannily desolate and abandoned, are just the analogy of where Atget had found himself

working underscored by the proximity of the camps and, lest it be forgotten, the execution sites of the Communards at Sartory.

It is necessary to recognise in this theme of the origin of place borne out in Michel de Certeau's notion of an existential site given by the 'place' where the stone is cast: "the *being*-there of something dead, from the pebble to the cadaver, an inert body always seems to found a place and give the appearance of a tomb." (de Certeau, 1978, p. 118) I think this is anticipated, not just by the number of the photographs in the Fortifications album, but the key one, the epic double poles whose apparatus is to 'put to death' the entire landscape. This is to emphasise the tragic meaning of place where the trace "of heroes who transgress frontiers and who, guilty of an offence against the law of the place, best provide its restoration with their tombs." (de Certeau, 1978, p. 119) Photography becomes the manner in which memory and metaphor are set on a fatal collision with place: photography's accident, its immanent contingency.

The photograph is historical in the sense of the monument, but as it transports, it moves beyond history and evolves a new concept of place which is a limit and an abyssal edge. This is precisely what is achieved on the parapet, an establishment of a metaphor rather than a fixed place, but one that teeters on the edge. Atget's series is prescient here, as each photograph anticipates the next, in a chain. The full impact of this which Atget records, is the transformation of history into movement. Now the train enters the frame and bisects the great towers of the poles by forming an incessant and indefinite delay – an eternal returning to the sacred site of the theological metaphor.

Summary:

The Bercy photographs lend themselves to the character of a modern zone, in their inert, yet uneasy sense of tension and structure. Furthermore, de Certeau's interpretation of how the casting of the stone forms the origin of a place can be taken in the same context as a photograph. This space at Bercy, like a great plateau, becomes the site of a fascinating contrast with the pastoral work of the Fortification pathways, and the particular quality of the Zoniers as a onto-geographical area. However, I think it goes further than that. Granted that Atget's empathy with the Chiffonier is clearly understood, I have argued that he deliberately made (or edited) fourteen photographs to reflect the Stations of the Cross. The

photograph of the double poles holds the key as the exceptional image in Atget's oeuvre and it has not been successfully explained by any author. I am suggesting that this particular image recognises a phenomenological change from place to movement. If I am to follow my convictions here, that there is a secret in the double poles that expresses an extraordinary moment in the history of photography, then it must be pursued.

PART 2: The Phenomenology of the Double Poles

"The (fortifications) scenery was technically animated but had much of the same effect as the brick walls and powdered dirt of the other documents. Form was rendered obtuse, thick, blank." (Nesbit, 1992, p 194)

The Documentation:

The photograph to which I have been referring to as the 'double poles' that Atget took on the parapet of Poniatowski as part of the Fortifications, is one of the most unusual photographs he ever made. To read this image (Fig. 5.5) in the series of the Stations of the Cross, as I have indicated as a possibility, it would appear at number ten where Christ is stripped bare of his garments. This seems apt, as this is the most naked of photographs made by Atget, with the few late exceptions of those taken at Sceaux in 1925. The poles brutally divide the image into two main sections. It is a truly startling affect in terms of the formal procedures and structures of photography. The structure of the photograph implies that there is but one 'successful' format of photography, where certain elements must combine into a unity. It would seem that Atget is trying to reduce this to its absolute. It may not seem feasible that this was the case as such reflexivity was precisely what Atget rejected about the surrealists and avant-garde modernism in general. But this cannot be ruled out entirely, because of praxis. This is that as Atget was approaching his subjects in the Fortifications, he sought the *vignette*, but there were no such shaded edges on the parapet. When confronted with this scene, Atget's intuition was to find the picture and the only way to do that was to centre it on a motif knowing that in photography, being essentially a pictorial geometry, the centre of any plate would be the crucial area. Atget took a decision that was self-evident, that to make the photograph worth it, it had to focus intensely on something that was an abstraction enabling the rest of the document to make sense.

The other and perhaps even more puzzling question, immediately suggested by the aggressiveness of the division is that of the *subject* of this photograph. What precisely is it? Are we to take the poles as being somehow a formal displacement-metonym of the 'technical sign' one that reveals symbolic undertones, either suggestive of Atget's own intuition of political (and aesthetic) awareness, or in allegorical mode, traditional

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representations? That, for example, the two overlapping poles simply got in the way, just so happened to be there at the very spot the Atget chose, because it gave on to the fullest expression of all that could be included in the image.

This posits a further question, raised by Molly Nesbit, that the primary elements of Atget's photographs can be considered in line with the 'technical sign'. (Nesbit, 1992, p. 190) Arguably the telegraph poles represented a possible technical sign as their use was becoming increasingly common as the French telephonic *réseau* was under government review at the time. (Atten, 1994, p. 247) Something happens to the sign in the photographs in the Fortifications touched upon in the previous chapter. It is of necessity transformed by the 'hostility' of nature into the allegorical *vignette* or a cliché. The sign is made to conform to a new idea about itself that it is part of a network of communications. It is interesting to note from the previous section how de Certeau's analysis of place constructs the image of the 'death' of an object at its foundation. Atget is also at pains with the signs of the poles to indicate a passing. This is different to the technical sign over the shop front or the trade entablature, for here Atget enters an area where the 'signs' are the actual railways signals and the poles themselves which are not a 'technical' subject in the old sense of the sign, but a powerful formal conduit stretching from the top to the bottom of the image. The other issue is that of the split screen affect. Even as Atget can only see the image back to front and upside down, it makes for a very daring compositional frame as the poles work no matter which way they are seen. The huge vertical bar of the poles no longer carries with it a figurative sign meaning what it symbolises. Instead the technical environment requires the sign as a functional and brute apparatus for an invisible signifier.

As he surfaces at Bercy, Atget confronts this new sign, the telegraph pole to which he dedicates as fundamental pictorial divider. It may well also be the base of the Cross offered as the metaphorical sign of the whole landscape which its presence acts to arrange. If the technical sign can be designated as the subject, is now replaced by a signal that refers only to its own functions, then the link to the technical sign as a cultural form is shattered. Instead, this is now as a signifier, in the sense of semiotics, and as a controlling system by which one signal now communicates with another. This arrangement effectively displaces the whole of the topography into a synchronised moving space. It is the first time that Atget confronts the phenomenon of modern technological space.

This allows two readings of Atget's spatial practice. The double pole photograph marks a turning point in his work, not just in sequence where it bears witness to the series of images, but as a pivotal object commanding the centre of the image and harnessing all other elements to its power. The poles work in a number of ways to engineer the photograph, and, at the same time, by the bifurcation of the picture and by the decapitation of the poles, another vector, the 'placing' (in the sense of de Certeau) of a radically opposed relation of intentionality and exteriority. This is achieved by the space of the photographs as being coextensive with that which is outside of it. Above the poles we do not see the terminals; on the horizon, we do not see how far this horizon extends and we cannot be sure if the train is really moving or not. When these vectors are organised by the central pivot, all these aspects are brought into a harmony, indeed a crescendo. When this happens, and intentionality then takes over from the sense of exteriority, (by this we begin to 'enter' the photograph), the poles, the horizon and the train are then redrawn and re-placed in relation to the verticality of the poles. Now we have potentially a synthetic reduction to an abstraction of photography that would be to recall (and indeed articulate), not only an interrogation of metaphor, but also Edmund Husserl's phenomenology of the 'sign' as either expression or indication. The outcome of this photograph is to question these two differences as forming into the point of presence at the very centre of Husserl's system and metaphorically a form of 'photographicity'. Atget's photograph both subtends and destroys this point of presence if its internal contradiction is read through Husserl, and made manifest in the image's complex torsion. The image is also to be taken, in de Certeau's understanding of place, as the inscription engraved on the tomb in the 'putting to death' of the landscape. The monumental, but dumb structure of the wooden poles occupy the place of an abyssal threshold held in abeyance by their sheer obstructivity. It is the most precarious revelation ever made in an Atget photograph.

The Place of the Double Poles:
When comparing some other examples of Atget's work post 1909, a different kind of knowledge is encountered in the Fortifications. This suggests his increasing estrangement from the old corners of the city as recognition of the arrival of an increasingly abstract mode of space relations determining the morphology of the city. As the city becomes

transformed so parts of it are abandoned or irrevocably changed and this prompts Atget to the sites of his work where he can package images for consumption by the archives or, at least intentionally at the time, the general public through commercial publishing and other applications as discussed before.

Now, as Atget stood beside the camera, poised to take the photograph, it is not to forget the rationale of the space beneath. The planned control of the environment was evinced by strategic significations of place and placing of sites and populations becoming the requirement of the Republic. Space was acquired to the needs of telegraphy and the railway. Atget had to acknowledge that the aim was to make space function economically and thus enable industrial growth and, at the same time, maintain the use of the Fortifications as providing for the security of the State, at least symbolically. At the same time, Atget had become the most dedicated of all the photographers who supplied clients and archives as well as keeping an eye on his marketing ideas. It is my guess that by this time he was so totally engrossed in the space of the city that he crossed the threshold of documentary meaning to the index as the apodictic of photography insofar as the self-evident is supplied by the immediacy of photography in terms of the image as captured by intention. In a metaphorical and intuitive sense, Atget was doing 'Husserlian' reductions via the camera. As well as giving the *vignette* its cliché by a popular style, he was finding some astonishingly *visible* images of the city seen precisely not as representations as, for example, in impressionist painting where trains and technology were increasingly subject, but by the immanent exploration of the visual conditions specific to photography.

I am suggesting that the photograph of the double poles presents a radically different kind of document. This document opens out to a spatial flux: it can be used to isolate and neutralise meaning by veiling the entire space with a self-copy, a doubling over of representation, which returns to its pre-representational presence. This is to suggest that a mechanism operates by employing another photograph over the original in an infinite movement of reductions and adumbrations, to use phenomenological terminology. This is not to say that this multiplying leads to any greater sense of 'knowledge', but rather to a highly complex tautologous form of photo-analogy. The mechanism here is the subdivision, the crux, the 'Cross' of the double poles.

Toward a Phenomenological Reading of the Double Poles:

Edmund Husserl refers to photography by the term 'presentation' not 'representation' as representation is but one aspect of 'presentation'. (Husserl, 2001, p. 172) This, as I understand it, is because he sees photography exemplifying of the apodictic (self-evident) content of a presentation in a direct way. Even allowing for the ambiguity of the term 'presentation' as referring to quality and matter, (imagination and perception), the merits of Husserl's terms is that they effectively rebalance the idea of photography to the surface appearance of an image sign as apart from, but connected to its illusion. Thus the 'picture' element is but the 'natural attitude' of the photographic datum. The underside, and invisible part to the reception of the image's illusion, has to be established 'noetically' by the mind constructing an intuition by a conceptual act compensating for the absence of the object, or some invisible quality or quantity attached to it. In the sense of the poles it is an image screen, which must be intuited on a complex level of knowledge about the object-signs contained within it. The most important aspect of this is the cylindrical shape of the poles, which appear flat in the picture, but that we know are 'round' in section as we have a concept of roundness of the pole to be thus able to give to the picture an all-over three dimensionality. As Judith Butler has put it, acts of *intention* – the process by which the picture is construed – are not, then, intuited by 'arbitrary acts of the imagination', but are the giving to the absent object the 'essentiality of negation to reality':

> "Although absent to consciousness, the opaque aspects of the object are nevertheless meaningful to consciousness. The triumph of phenomenology in this regard has been to dignify the realm of the unexpressed and the absent as itself constitutive of meaningful reality." (Butler, 1989, p. 109)

Husserl is aware of the deception of the image 'naively' contained by consciousness if confused with the object depicted. This scepticism of the picture informs analogue presentations, as they are analogous, not as copies of things by other things, but copies of themselves reduced to what Husserl terms, a 'surrogate.' "This photograph represents St. Peter's Church the word presentation is also applied to the image-subject or thing represented […] the thing appearing in photographic colours, not the photographed church". (Husserl, 2001, p. 172)

Thus Husserl's theory of photography is nothing but the abstracted reduction to pure surrogacy rather than the immediacy of the photograph's depicted image, not a church, but a photographic surrogate of a church and so on. There can be no immediate mimesis to the real church, because presentations are *apriori* of any delusion that may occur by the confusion of the thing with the mental image of it. Inner pictures are not useful as for Husserl they do not constitute "a real moment in the imaginative experience." (Husserl, 2001, p. 173)

The real moment of imaginative experience would be to take into account the surrogate, as a 'real' substitute for another reality from which it is imprinted. The wager here is that Husserl's phenomenology shatters the indexical link of the camera referent to the meaning of the photograph as being a representation that directly pictures the nature of the world reduced to the chemical reaction of "light on the silver salts." (Damisch, 1980, p. 287) Hubert Damisch's "dream of a photographic substance distinct from subject matter", something he anticipates in the very first photograph, which was fixed as early as 1822 on the glass of a camera obscura, as the "most beautiful image so far achieved", would not find common cause with the aims of Husserlian phenomenology. The idea that the very first photograph contains the essence of all photography, as photography's *eidos* would be to foreclose the reduction. Husserlian phenomenology would be less concerned with what the picture depicts, but *how* it shows by the categories of presentation and adumbration.

Each representation represents *eidos*, or the idea of the 'idea' for Husserl: it is a viewpoint insofar as in order to intuit the representation we must be able to construe a mental image that conforms to it "…the present object being what it is only in contrast to and in conjunction with the same object as absent and vice versa." (Sokolovski, 1978, p. 22) The absent comment of the representation, the presentation, exists in conjunction with a noetically derived image, which is both contradictory and identical. The analogue then presents in the form of a tautology.

The power of the poles in the Atget is not in itself the clarity of the presentation, but merely its sign superimposed over itself. The pivotal centrality of the poles operates to divide the photograph as it divides the world seen in the camera, and their function, which we *assume* in blocking out the central avenue of the photograph, is erroneous. They give measure and orientation to the image as a landscape by emerging immediately in the dead centre of the

photograph dividing it into two halves and also to bisect the horizon space. Thus the image becomes four quadrants of space and consequently, the poles effectively grid the image into a crux. This crux, or pivot, is the very central button of the whole image. As John Szarkowski observes, the dead centre is the photographer's blind spot:

> The pointing finger identifies that conceptual centre on which the mind's eye focuses – a clear patch of the visual field that one might cover with a silver dollar held at arm's length – outside of which a progressive vagueness extends to the periphery of our vision. The photographer's procedure is different, for whether he means to or not, he will make a picture of sorts: a discrete object with categorical edges. (Szarkowski, 1982, p. 12)

The function of the poles is not simply to subdivide the image into two sections, but to unlock a highly complex idea that the central plane of the image is an articulated threshold, particular to *all* photographs as contingent upon the frame of the aperture being subject to a central divide. Atget then, in the double poles, reaches the apotheosis of his medium – exacts a limit point that, because of the break caused by the poles allows the photograph to read like a photograph within the photograph and thus a work of referentiality on a par with the original camera obscura of Nièpce. The poles indicate three phenomenological schemas: the 'hinge' (Fig. 5.11), the 'shift' (Fig. 5.12) and finally the 'pivot' (Fig. 5.13). This illusion forming a crack down the centre of the photograph is predicated on the type of pole that was common around the rail yards whose spaces permitted the insertion of posts and where there was requirement for communication networks to converge. The pairing of poles (their typology reflected in other poles in the distance) was to pile them approximately a meter or so apart. At the top, or near it, they would be connected by a couple of stanchions for strength and to further reinforce the poles in their exposed site an angled support post was connected to the main pole. This method was used where more telegraphy was required (it is clearly a question at the junction of the PLM with other lines that signalling here is itself a nexus), and where more wires inter–crossed, with more than one telegraph pole required to carry both the weight and number of wires.
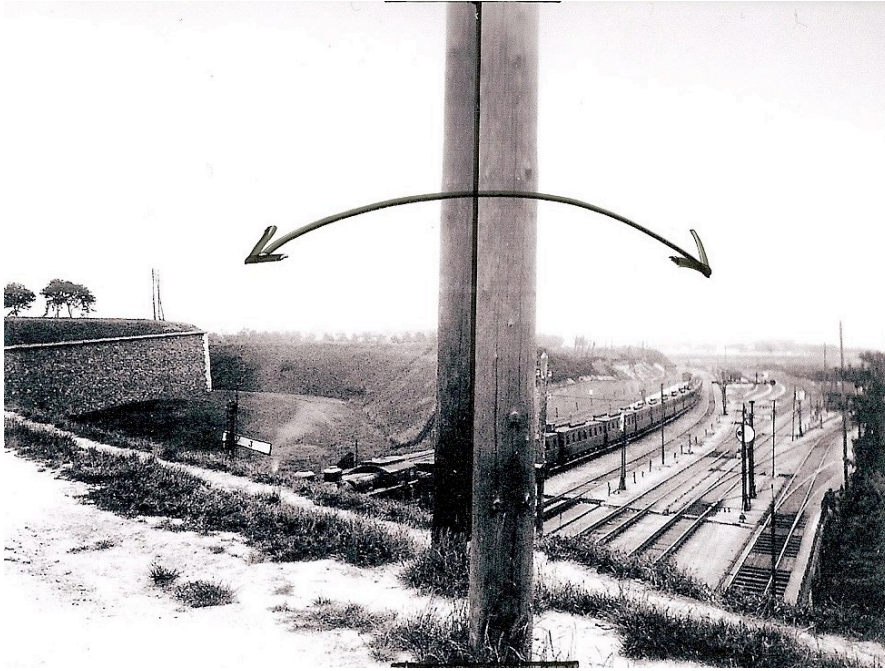
Fig. 5.11. The hinge.
The central fold of the image enters a double movement a hinging that can fold out or in to the photograph. At the same time the gap between the two poles is strengthened to make it more difficult to take in the image as a whole. The curious affect of the hinge is that the train appears to move.
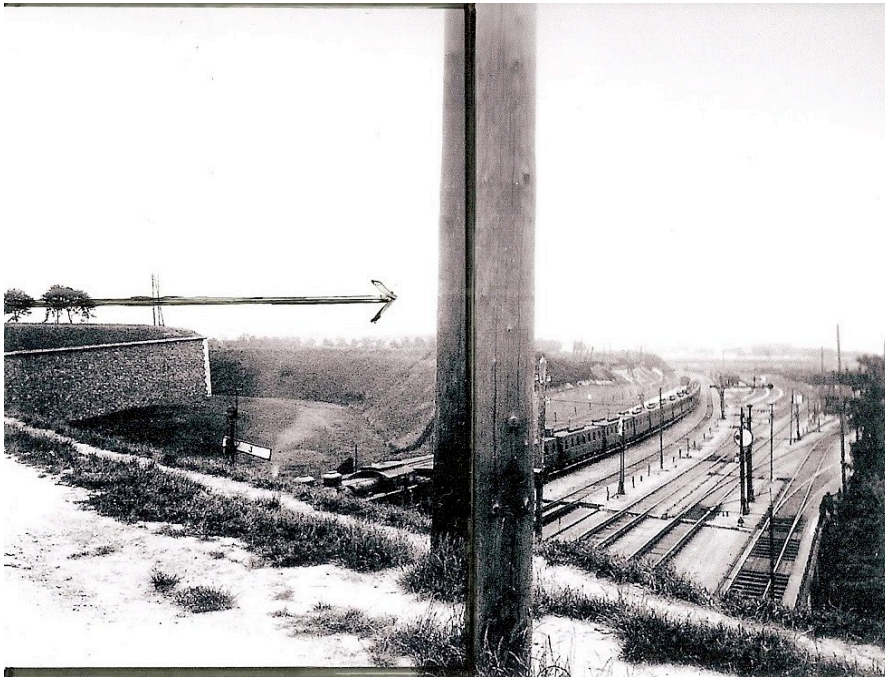

Fig. 5.12. The shift
The space between the two poles is now opened and the other affect here is to invite the shifting of the left hand side of the photograph either over or under the right. The movement of the train is halted; now the topography itself is in movement from left to right under itself, like a stage set on rollers.
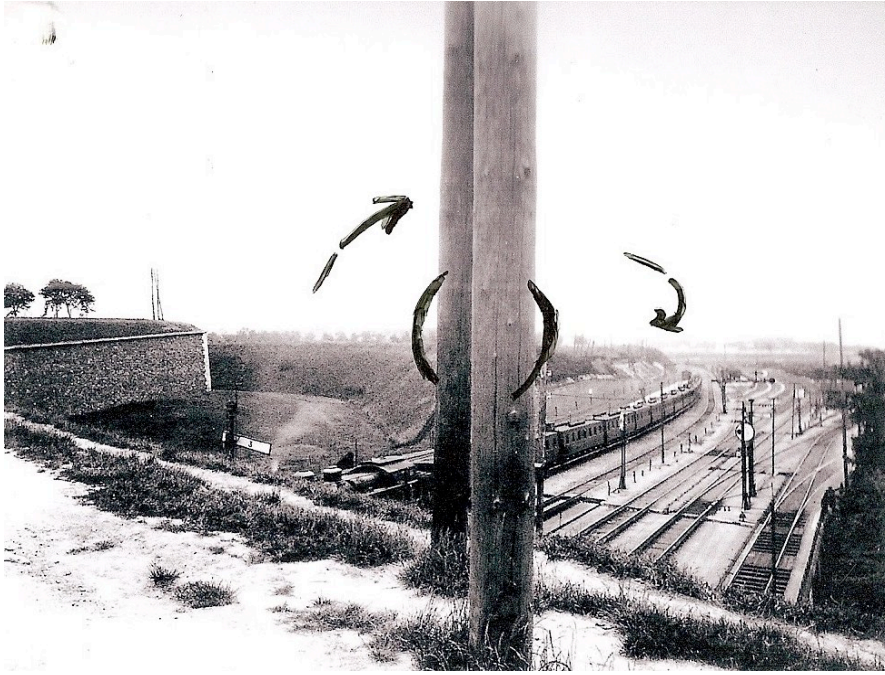
Fig. 5.13. The pivot.

Now the train moves again, its puff of smoke following the line of the centrifugal force that the two poles induce into the image. The very centre point which cannot be precisely located as it is concealed behind the first pole now exerts a turning motion from the top of the photograph as an illusory edge thus implying a certain infinite point somewhere up that pole and the ground into which the poles exert a tremendous pressure heightening the anxiety of the proximity of the parapet edge.

Fig. 5.14. Eugène Atget: *Parc de Sceaux, avril, 1925, sept heures.*

It is possible to compare the sectioning of this image with the double poles. Again there is a complexity of focus and image pivot which here becomes much more like a human body operating in the fundamental archè of knowledge. These Atget images attest to the modernity of reduction to the condition of possibility for the medium in a way that would be taken up later by certain painters such as Barnett Newman who devoted a series of works to the Stations of the Cross.

Summary:

Atget more than acknowledges the presence of the poles at Bercy than he had in earlier photographs; now he uses them to, hinge, shift, prop and pivot the entire image as way of harnessing a highly complex reality into a unity. Once that is accomplished it is then possible to eidetically reduce the image to its essence, the great downward movement and 'absolute' presence of the poles, which multiply the image in virtually endless variations of shifts and movement throughout the whole landscape. The more they are concentrated upon, the poles seem to lose their ontological anchor as poles to become *archè*, foundational structures. Is there a sense of departure here? As the natural attitude is gradually bracketed in the reduction, a mysterious and forbidding presence floats in an eschatological void, a limit of place and also a limit of existence, photographed on the very edge of the Bercy precipice.

This is the way in which formal abstraction in modern art can be thought. Rosalind Krauss in a fascinating essay on Marcel Duchamp, in which she also discusses Jacques Derrida's critique of Husserl, recalling the punctual moment the "now of self presence", which preserves the assumption of sense which it is intended to reduce, offers, via Derrida the possibility of the preontological sign as the trace "which phenomenology cannot acknowledge". (Krauss, 1994, p. 177) In this sense, Husserl's theory of photography is of rather limited use, even if it has opened the door to new thinking about photographic signs as distinct from all other signs.

Like the effect of the poles, vision is rendered split in two, and with that doubling Husserl's singular eye is overcome. The sign and signifier subdivide the original sign in endless repetition of it, and shatter it across the space at Bercy. It is to point to a preontological real, a parallax vision of the impossible crux of photography as photography is also blind, the central spot and the real of the image is deferred. Another example which, by its curiously ambiguous use of shape and space, bears out the impossibility of the punctual now, is a late work by Atget made in the gardens at Sceaux (Fig. 5.14) of which John Szarkowski notes,

that Atget "in his first thirty years [he] never made a picture so perfectly just and unfamiliar as this one." (Szarkowski, 1983, p. 179) It is an image that like the double poles is in my phrase, 'analogously tautological' insofar as each frame of perception made in the picture can be the *surrogate* (Husserl's useful word) of the unity of the work and defer its idea into infinite levels of seeing and sense.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to define a photographic subject in the context of space which has been referred to as a location of place. I have suggested that photography presents an emergent image which occupies a place different to any that preceded it. The methodology has ultimately been to reconfigure a new relation between photography and historical analysis, which I have cited as a 'place' in photography's evolution.

The research has uncovered the link between photography augmented to instances in the history of political theocracy. This 'theocracy' has appeared alongside photography even though the invention of the medium seemed to offer irrefutable documentary proof of concrete reality. Consequently the uses of photography have been exploited in an image which has extended beyond this reality, encompassing historical interpretation and additional values of identification. I have tried to show that such photographic images have not only provided a way of asserting political dominion, but as they did so have also lent themselves to more subversive manifestations.

I have underlined at different points in each chapter that the appearance of photography has posed itself in the guise of images of reason and enlightenment. It is perhaps strange that the emergence of such empirical *dispositifs* or operational structures have defined a new concept of place, one of visualisation connected to urban space. In essence, the study has been to confront the situation of place by photographic means as also suggesting that such places carry with them an ethical meaning. This became clear in the correlation of Haussmann's *dégagement* with the tragedy of the Commune as employing photographic metaphors. To this end, I spent some effort in trying to re-contextualise the decline of architectural photography in the Commune and the continued effects of this during the Third Republic. I have argued that if it had not been for the involvement of Eugène Atget in the more marginal spaces in the city, photography would certainly have lapsed into a tame mannerism. Atget's work still connects to the great architectural projects of the Second Empire, but as it does so it attempts to find the trace of 'the people' together with their attempts to raise a Social Republic.

Three architectural structures, the Tour de St. Jacques, the Colonne de Vendôme and the twin telegraph poles that Eugène Atget photographed on his journey over the Bercy

viaduct, have provided *motifs* around which much of the research has developed. Each of these structures has operated as an 'apparatus' relating to certain historical stages in photography. Beginning with the ultimate use of the power of photography to outstrip vision itself in Baldus' work, I then sought the involution of this achievement in the photography of the Commune, no matter what the sympathies of each photographer. I have stressed how the decline of architectural photography led into the allegory of history in a popular form of representation, documenting the doomed rebellion of the Communards. In particular, I referred in some detail to the photographs made at the site of the destruction of the Vendôme column.

In the final sections of my study, I have attempted a 'phenomenological' synthesis of the historical inevitability of the reappearance of the columns in the metaphor of the *calvaire* in the slow turning of Atget's great telegraph poles as having ramifications for a changing concept of space and time. In the final analysis, I do not share the view that photography marks an end of history, but rather that history itself is made to occur 'immanently' as a moving substance captured by photography.

The walk that Atget took from Ivry to Bercy when, in passing stages, he took the fourteen photographs to which I gave an eschatological reading, was the subject of the second part of chapter five. This represented the combining of empirical research of the first part of the chapter with concepts of place along a trajectory involving the phenomenology of photographic intentionality. The chapter was built around empirical research on the site of Atget's work in the industrial zone of Bercy where he had made a number of memorable photographs including the one I referred to as the double poles whose fascination I have interrogated at considerable length. I questioned how the landscape was made to conform to the structure of the photograph and therefore to dispel or suspend all notions of pictoriality. The premise was to suggest a reading from photography to phenomenology by the 'eidetic' reduction, citing the work of Edmund Husserl, and given expression in three differing compositional schemes. I argued that the latent content of phenomenology opens a place of observance to the realisation of eschatological truths, emphasised by the precarious position of Atget's camera. This involved a parallel between the Christian theological crux advanced by the allegory of the two poles against the radical mechanics of the image. The second part of the chapter questioned how the photograph could accommodate the brute

fact of the reduction to Husserlian *eidos* and the possibility of onto-theological origin in the same image.

If all possible images are construed by the mind *apriori* to some kind of schema already given in terms of a certain visual horizontal vertical axis, which photography 'apodictically' shows by objective reduction to be already an imprinted theological percept, it would seem that photography would inevitably claim demonstrable importance in phenomenological thinking. In photography, this would attenuate the phenomenological reduction, as the camera does not work on the same visual structures as those supposed by phenomenology; it has no 'consciousness' of its own.

In the critique by Adorno, Husserl is chided for the preservation of precisely the perceptual idealism that he intended to overthrow, leaving therefore the sense of its own epistemological and ultimately false origins intact. Adorno equated this assumption of Husserlian phenomenology with 'old photography' (Adorno, 1982 p. 146), precisely that which Atget practices although, as already remarked, Adorno also accorded Atget as having saved photography by exploiting it commercially. However, Adorno does not tackle the ocularcentrism of Husserl head on. David Michael Levin points out that if Adorno had made this the target of his attack and the outcome of his notion of the preservation of the bourgeois 'spirit' in Husserl's use of sense, then he might have reached a point where "the biblical *Bilderverbot* would give rise to a healthy scepticism regarding what can be seen and encouraged Reason's emancipation from the fetishizing tendencies of seeing and its rhetoric." (Levin, 2003, p. 86)

The analogue, the tiny spark that enables light-sensitive images to occur, has been a central mediator of this study. Rather than in the positivist context of this science, I have sought to try and identify its historical influence by introducing aspects of photography into the irrationality and contingency of photography. The definition of the analogue emerged as a self-contradictory element, neither positive nor negative, but as a receptor mediating between positive and negative registers. It is a purely phenomenological reality that locates situations by distributions of light on a scale of measure that can render the intuition of differences throughout a visual field. It is just that this is now determined by the concept of what photography accomplishes. The analogue is a unity which allows for moves in two directions: it is both the commodity and the statement. In this sense, the analogue produces

a unity of production and consumption, which introduces the quotient of subjective desire: "The need which consumption feels for the object is created by the perception of it". (Marx, 1993, p. 92) Capital seeks to overcome the instability of production and consumption by installing itself as a 'natural' regulator that ultimately appears in an image form. Returning to the analogy announced in Deleuze and Guattari's theory of the percept, which I argued was both analogue and cliché, would be consistent with the image commodity. Both Baudelaire's and Atget's percepts which I link in chapter four are then identical: they are both commodity clichés.

Thus for Marx, the essence of a unity is the metaphor expressed as commodity. In the cliché it is like gold, which *par excellence* conceals its relations of production. (Marx, 1993, p. 881) In terms of the system of values that Marx interrogates however, he affects a critical shift from the transcendental metaphor to the immanence of the metonymic displacement. This is to circumvent the addition of illusory qualities which the commodity lacks in real terms, to that which it can gain purely extrinsically by being linked to other commodities. This idea of specular capital is technologically driven and replaces metaphor as the abstraction of the value of commodities. Displacement enables all commodities to be arranged into various arrangements, but in particular, sets of photographs related to one another as parts of a "total system as purely extrinsic relationships." (White, 1990, p. 295) This means that the production of photography is a system for the production of such relationships, extending even into the juridical, which I associated with the state of exception.

It is interesting to speculate that on the question of the commodity, capital becomes phenomenological in the Husserlian sense, but precisely that which is bracketed out to leave essentially an empty, abstract image. This is the case with Atget in the Fortifications where the *vignette* acts to transpose an excess of sentimental value. Further speculation could include some consideration from Husserl back to Foucault's dissection of positivism. (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982, p. 42) Perhaps Husserl's attempts to override aesthetic paradigms and seek out a new object, one of immaterial essence, as the analogy of the spectacle of capital, is immanent in photography's idealism? This applies much more to a commodity capital, in terms of image values, suggesting in fact even closer parallels between Husserl and Marx gathered under the conditions of possibility for modern

experience anticipated in the 'system' (concept and intuition) of the Kantian object. This is the excess of the 'thing', the negation of the original copy, and taken up by Simon Jarvis in his book on Theodor Adorno (Jarvis, 1999), where it becomes clear that commodities are not really 'things' at all, but are mentally construed attributes of things, taken as things-in-themselves.

> "Adorno argues that Kant's enquiry into the conditions of the possibility of experience truthfully bears witness to certain structural features of modern natural–historical experience. The Kantian object produced by 'pure' conceptual activity upon the material of intuition closely resembles the commodity as a supposed product of 'pure' abstract labour. The insistence that for experience to be possible, a concept must work on an intuition, is conditional upon what experience itself is increasingly becoming: a production of exchange value for its own sake." (Jarvis, 1999, p. 157)

For Jarvis this understanding of things opens the way for Marx to think the commodity form as those 'things' which have heightened fetishized value and are but representations in terms of clichés or 'money'. I had sought to persuade that historical images are also value clichés and that such clichés negate the weight of history by the photograph and allow it a translucency that was reflected not just in Atget's *vignettes*, but in some of the photographs of the Commune.

In terms of the analogue, changes in modes of production led by photography were to have a profound affect for the emergence of the reproduced. It is the modality of the sign as commodity that accounts for reification *per se* as a general system transposed to the 'image'. Marx's concepts of base/superstructure models of capital were also becoming more attuned to the mysterious movements of capital by the use of credit and, even as early as 1880's, pure electro-magnetic analogue technology had begun, with mathematician, James Clerk Maxwell, to determine the *relations* of stock market values shattering even the credit models which are replaced by speculation . (Richards, 2003, p. 75) In this context of immaterial transcendence, I noted how Atget's photographic quotations of the technical sign morphed into the topographical document in the *Zoniers* as recording a state of affairs. Here, Atget engaged in a topological analysis in which he found discreet localities, often ones where trash becomes entangled with the sublime.

Only with analogue technologies did the idea of the world as photograph become possible and the contention throughout this study has been to seek out how this occurred, that is to

ask what the important events of the photographic apparatus were. Rather than give the chronology of photography, it has been to pursue the analogue factor as a surface of emergence for the ever widening influence of the commodity of photography. This to say that photography is a simulation and of necessity a 'negative' intended to announce the virtual place of photography in the dominant system of representation. This implies that photography reaches a limit of place by its inability to firmly identify with any particular place, but is transposable throughout. The limit of place is ultimately a ubiquitous idea. The technical advance of the photographic camera thus plays a role in the ubiquity of the image. There is perhaps an equivalent analogy in the 'Copernican Revolution' of Kant's transcendental reason that affected the ways in which space and time were experienced. Kant had asserted that the objects of perception were not to be considered as independent of perception, and to which intuition had to find adequate concepts. On the contrary, the objects of perception were entirely the products of mental apprehensions. In other words, it is not possible to have cognisance of objects beyond experience. The question (and it is not a question that it has been necessary to resolve in this study) is whether photography with its intrinsic ability to produce pictorial documents is to return to the Cartesian paradigm of doubt thus reversing the Kantian revolution. That may have been the undercurrent to the introduction, which included a brief excursus on Michel Foucault's reading of *Las Meninas*, the great painting by Velasquez that overturned the central pivot as subject of the gaze and replaced it with an empty space. *Las Meninas* is hardly a 'Kantian' painting: rather it stays firmly in the questions of Descartes as affirming only the doubt of reason to which even the king of Spain has succumbed.

At root this is to account for the gaze taken to mean the field of vision as distinct from perception by the eye. The gaze positions the subject as no longer at the centre and in control through the eye. Now the eye is displaced by the gaze, obscured by the 'silver dollar' of the void of the central field in the camera's apparatus. Again, Daguerre by his action of having the boots shined in one his very earliest 'Daguerreotypes,' puts himself into this realm of the gaze. He is not the centre of the representation, but a component 'object' in it. The image is then one of decentering, as objects of perception were no longer given as *apriori* representations confirming consciousness, but as contingent to any possibility for consciousness. Photography externalises experience by the identification of a

reality with the photographed image. From then on, the photograph was to determine that the object conformed to its photograph as a virtual place with its own reality, and not as representation to be judged by its conformity to reason. By the same token, this short-circuits the Kantian concept of apperception, that reason anticipates its object of perception. Photography establishes an identity of the object as different to any pre-consciousness of it as it also establishes the perception of an object need not be through direct experience. The photograph is only identical to the non-identity it gives back to its objects. However, what is the irrefutably 'apodictic' in the photograph is that it accounts for the persistence of the past. Braquehais captures this so superbly in the Place Vendôme in chapter two, an image that, in my opinion, haunts the entire history of the Republic.

Place is the designator of where something is, its position in space. It is also symbolic as it relates in the past tense to one's place in history, thus it is a position in a spatio-historical field of relations. It could be said that place is being, the fundamental idea of existence as the place one's own body occupies. Place is a problem for the photographer because they must stand aside in order to allow the camera to take the position from which the photograph can be made. It is thus the camera that is in place and the photographer loses their ontological certainty as a result. The photographer, entering into the visual field of the apparatus is also produced by that field as they too become objects to their own cameras. By place then it is not just meant that one holds a place, but that one *is* placed, by bodily position and by the actual reality of production. As photography intercedes in place by naming it and also by transposing it geographically by analogous comparison, the medium produces the 'teleology' of places.

The apparatus of photography makes history immanent which is what I mean by the 'limit' of place; this limit is the image-actuality of history. In the light of photography an immanent 'transcendence' is produced as a new category, whether in archived documents, or simple photographs of events. The category of photography as a unity of all its effects in the limit of place thus passes over into an *ethics* of mediation. This is not only to complete (or perhaps undo) a certain philosophising by replacing its history with the temporisation of space captured by the photograph, but is to alter the useful parameter of historical research in an image whose affects are photographic in origin. Photography changes history: there is one history before photography and one after its invention. It is not by chance that

photography produces an image that is to coincide with the great epoch of 19th century historicism. This is felt in the emergence of fatalist theories of history accompanying the discussion in chapter two of the dialectical 'standstill', the manner in which the photographic image intervenes in the Eternal Return.

Perhaps this question has remained rather mute in my study. I have been unwilling to follow Vilém Flusser and declare categorically that photography is the "first post-historical image" (Flusser, 2006) as this would be to render the Commune photographs simply as post historical 'historic' souvenirs. This would consign the superbly rephotographed work of Hippolyte Blancard to a digitalised footnote, when in fact they bring to light fascinating new insights into the events when they were taken. On the opposite tack, Atget is already photographing from within history in the unerring knack he had of anticipating the disappearance of historical signifiers. This is not without a certain irony, that if Atget turned up to photograph your 'place' he could be seen as the harbinger of doom. Atget's drollery is to play its part; the old camera, the tramp like appearance, obscure personality and, of course the 'law' of the document, which he tended in the manner of a filing clerk. He was a commercial man, a trader, but he was also because of that trade an alternative historian, one who locates the heterotopias of the great *mundus* that was the Zoniers I described in chapter three.

I have also speculated, but perhaps could have gone further into how photography is entangled with the 'concept' of history in the manner suggested by Reinhardt Kosselleck. (Kosselleck, 2004) In the Second Republic such a concept was adhered to by Marx in the demands for equality and social justice, but in the hands of a capitalist like Haussmann already claiming the future, the concept would be the absolute commodification of space itself. The effect of this on the experience of time was that photography captured its dialectic, frozen into a contingent magnitude, which can be recycled through time. One is forced to accept that time still retains an epistemology based on finitude, the certainty of which photography so horrifically confronted in the Pere Lachaise. Kosselleck notes how Marx was trapped between his economic analysis and his historicism, represented by the revolutionary apotheosis: "The supposedly final struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is, without doubt, consummated in the dimensions of the Last Judgment, which he did not succeed in defining on purely economic grounds." (Kosselleck, 2002, p. 244) If

this formula of final judgement is turned around, there now emerges a seam of thought to do with the affective analogy of photography in Atget's 'eschatological' set of the Fourteen Stations gathered across his two albums.

> "If one observes the topos of the eschatological foreshortening of time in terms of its historical interpretations, one arrives at the astonishing finding that from the initially suprahistorical foreshortening came a gradual acceleration of history itself." (Kosselleck, 2002, p. 245)

This history is inseparable from a political theology precisely based around the technology of analogue. With image reproduction, history itself is reconstructed sentimentally, and lent to a popular identification becoming tied to progress. In order for the photographic image to be considered political, and therefore historic, is to anticipate the site of the Last Judgment. For me, there is something of this inevitability in Atget's set leading up to the two telegraph poles whose spinning motion reveals the instability of all images.

The future promised by Haussmann ended in disaster and after more than forty years it is left to Atget to pick over the traces out in the boondocks, pushing his cart through the miasma of the Republic's deserts. There he was to find redemption of sorts in the *vignette* and the cliché, but also in the huge rising up of the world-power of two telegraph poles driven into the very abyss of existence. The context that arose in the final chapter was the foreshadowing of a phenomenology of history which is the direct consequence of photography. Photography is responsible for conferring immanence so that historical events thereby become 'virtual'. This is to challenge the belief that Husserlian phenomenology is transcendent and thus escapes from history, but that photography foreshadows history (is inherently to mark the past) and renders any reduction radically contingent to 'photography'. After photography, history is 'immanently contingent' as it is recorded to the image of itself in the actual space of its occurrence. As Deleuze and Guattari assert, history and reason both are 'deterritorialised', "[…] no good reason but contingent reason; no universal history except of contingency." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2003, p. 93)

In the light of this contingency, the artworks of topographical documentation advance an abstraction in photography. The system of photography touches upon a preontolgical substrate of the image in negation of any subsequent reflection. This suggests lines of

enquiry tacit to this study, for example, the photographic archive of Bernd and Hilla Becher, whose industrial archaeology could be 'contingent' to a *rapprochement* between the work of Husserl and Benjamin's investigations of the theocracy of the political economy. Furthermore, the work of Marcel Duchamp, whose 'Large Glass', *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors Even* (1915-1923), remains central to Molly Nesbit's continuing enquiry into Atget, is very similar to the photograph of the double poles as it contains an eternal suspension. In the Duchamp, the two glass panels are each proportionally equivalent to the size of plate used in old photography, but are mounted one above the other. The Large Glass is also a phenomenological machine, like Atget's photograph, an analogy further supported by Duchamp's folder drawings of telegraph poles. There is a connection here; it is the *réseau*, the network of the French communication system that Duchamp, in advance, had begun to explore. If Duchamp is aware of the science of electricity as transcending space and time, so it is Atget who had the humble task of finding it in the harsh light of Bercy.

Phenomenology then, tends to lapse into formalism and disappear into its own contradictions unless its photography can be reinvented historically to realise its own immanent contingency. Do the historical concepts of Kosselleck subtended by photography present new categories of immanent history? This is a strong possibility, but this is also to feedback into Benjamin once more, surely the first great theorist of photographic history. Perhaps he arrives posthumously in this 'place' which I first referred to in the introduction and more fully repeated here. It says something very profound:

> "Everything in these early pictures was set up to last; not only the incomparable grouping of the people –whose disappearance was certainly one of the most precise symptoms of what happened to society in the second half of the century – even the folds that a garment takes in these images persists longer. *One needs only look at Schelling's coat; it enters almost unnoticed into immortality; the forms, which it assumes on its wearer, are not unworthy of the folds in his face.* In short, everything speaks of the fact that a photographer of 1850 was on the highest level of his instrument –for the first and for long time for the last time."
> (Benjamin, 1980, p. 205, my italics)

To paraphrase Roland Barthes, Schelling's coat is worn by someone whose eyes had once looked into those of Hegel. (Barthes, 1984, p. 3) Benjamin had grasped this; the coat represents a new history of the gaze. In this sense, photography is the eternal return as it is

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always in its own contingent and immanent present. He is the first to really underscore the phenomenon of the contingencies of time and space determined by photography that my study has endeavored to follow. It changes things, and one can no longer ignore the history of place as an aberration, and neither is it possible, following Lefebvre, to avoid the conclusion that space is the political contestation of class interests. So it remains: photography has perhaps now served its purpose, reached its own point of departure until once more encountered in the archives of Paris, wherein the work of Baldus' unforgiving façades remain a haunting presence.

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