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Isabelle Backouche, Boris Bove, Robert Descimon and Claude Gauvard, eds., *Notre-Dame et l'Hôtel de Ville: Incarner Paris du Moyen Âge à nos jours.* Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne / Comité d'Histoire de la Ville de Paris, 2016. 395 pp. Maps, figures, notes, and indices. €34.00 (pb). ISBN 978-2-85944-921-6.

Review by Charles Rearick, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

When Notre-Dame cathedral observed its 850th anniversary in 2013, the decidedly *laïc* mayoralty of Paris hosted a colloquium on the history of the jubilee church--along with the history of its monumental neighbor, the Hôtel de Ville. Seventeen scholarly papers, now published in the book under review, compared and contrasted the two--architecture, exterior spaces, institutions and powers, attendant sociabilities, and quotidian practices. They also examined the complicated relations between the two institutions over the centuries since the Middle Ages.

The lengthy introduction begins with the bishops of Paris, the city's principal church magistrates and pastors from 346 on. For centuries, they were preeminent Parisian authorities in the secular as well as spiritual realm. The bishops exercised their dual authority for almost a thousand years before a municipal institution came into existence.

The earliest municipal government (ca. 1260) stemmed from a small group of wealthy merchants choosing one of theirs to be the *prévôt des marchands*, along with four *échevins* (aldermen), to represent Parisians in dealings with the king. From there the introduction traces the growing role of the king and royal officers in the city. After that history, the focus turns to some brief revolutionary periods of Paris self-governance under a mayor and then long periods of the central power governing the capital--until the 1977 city election of a mayor.

The bishop's seat, the cathedral of Notre-Dame, was the emblem of the city several centuries before the construction of the Hôtel de Ville, and it remained the prime emblem until the Eiffel Tower was built. Around the cathedral, the bishop and the cathedral chapter governed extensive territory, autonomous enclaves, in premodern Paris. Hélène Noizet's paper shows in precisely documented detail the domains of the chapter of Notre-Dame and their expansion from the tenth century through the eighteenth. Wielding seigneurial powers, the cathedral's canons and the bishop carried out basic city-management functions with their own tax collections, courts, and prisons on the Ile de la Cité.

The colloquium's focus on the two sites of authority inevitably raises the question of whether or not the ecclesiastical and municipal powers competed and clashed over the centuries. Several of the articles answer that question directly: conflict was not serious or common. One reason is that the religious and the municipal institutions were not as separate as they appear when examined individually. The superiors administering the two were drawn from the same Parisian elites--families and allies that formed informal networks. The municipal institution of *échevins* developed from the leading merchants' *hansa*, representing several dozen families. Notre-Dame's canons and bishops belonged to those same families. A notable example was the bishop Guillaume Viole (1564-1568), a patrician Parisian, who enjoyed strong ties to the city's *bonnes maisons* and lived the lifestyle of a seignior, free of the kind of royal control his successors knew. The intertwining of the elites also comes across well in Julie Claustre's account of "L'affaire Perrin Marc (1358)." In that dramatic episode, the bishop and the city, the clergy and the bourgeois, joined in common cause against the monarchy's violation of asylum rights and municipal liberties.

Étienne Hamon's paper examines a notable case of the institutions working together: the rebuilding of the Pont de Notre-Dame. A wooden version of the bridge collapsed in 1499. It was less than a century old, but the municipality had failed to maintain it. The royal government then stepped in and took decision making away from the city fathers, though the city still played a role in discussing and financing the project. The canons also participated in discussions, vigorously defending their interests and influencing decisions made by the *Parlement.* Rebuilding the Pont de Notre-Dame, this time in stone, became the biggest Paris construction project since the completion of Notre-Dame. And it went smoothly. "En somme, malgré quelques points de friction occasionnels, les rapports entre Notre-Dame et la Ville restèrent pacifiques tout au long du chantier de construction du pont, comme ils l'avaient été auparavant" (p. 64).

Hamon's chapter ends with the observation that the bridge reconstruction served as a preparation for the next big city project, which was a new Hôtel de Ville (1533-41) to replace the inadequate Maison aux Piliers. As Flaminia Bardati's paper notes, King François I did not directly sponsor the construction of a new city hall, but he chose the architect (Domenico de Cortona) and imposed the final project on the city. His choice was a splendid Renaissance-style building, with a balance of elements "à la française" and "à l'italienne." Above all, the king wanted the new city hall to be impressively monumental, befitting the capital of the kingdom.

By now it is clear that the book's title, naming two powers, leaves out a third major power, the monarchy, which loomed large in the city's governance from the sixteenth century on. Royal officers took greater control of the city, while the old patriciate of merchants lost more and more administrative functions. The canons of the cathedral experienced a similar loss. One example (the focus of Christine Jéhanno's paper) is their removal from the administration of the Hôtel-Dieu in 1505. Authority passed from the cathedral chapter to a board of governors, named by the municipality but controlled by the Parlement and the king. As several chapters show, that shift of power was particularly marked after François I's decision in 1528 to make Paris his primary residence.

The bishop of Paris, named by the king from 1516 on, put the cathedral at the service of the monarchy in conspicuous ways, especially in the eighteenth century under the ambitious anti-*philosophe*, anti-Jansenist archbishop Christophe de Beaumont (the diocese of Paris was elevated

to an archbishopric in 1622 at the request of Louis XIII). Notre-Dame was the Bourbons' favorite theater of royal ceremonies, such as *Te Deums* celebrating princely births and military victories. And Notre-Dame had the honor of receiving the entrails of Louis XIV and Louis XV for entombment--the rest of their bodies going to Saint-Denis. With good reason the "bourgeois" of Paris viewed Notre-Dame as a "temple monarchique" (p. 222). Though important to the monarchy for special occasions, the cathedral building itself deteriorated over the centuries due to neglected maintenance and vandalism. In addition, it suffered depredations in the eighteenth century when the vogue of classical taste brought on a scorn of the medieval style. The condition of the building became "catastrophique" (p. 89) by the 1830s.

The restoration of Notre-Dame, which began under the July Monarchy and continued under the Second Empire, was the monarchy's most prominent contribution to the cathedral's architectural history. The central government assured the financing from beginning to end. The underlying cultural support was a new appreciation of the Gothic, owing much to Victor Hugo's famous *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) and to prints showing a pristine Notre-Dame. Through years of discussions, luxuriant imaginations conceived various Gothic elements to be recreated, many of which did not become part of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's restoration. Renée Davray-Piekolek makes that point by bringing to light several *maquettes* now in the Musée Carnavalet.

Judith Lyon-Caen illumines the role of Romantic literature and writers in shaping images of the 1482 Notre-Dame--cultural sources of inspiration for the restoration. The drawings that architect Viollet-le-Duc submitted in a bid for the contract in 1843 owed much to a Romantic sense of the past that Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* exemplified. Decades later, after guiding the work on the building, the architectural drawings served as illustrations for the novel in a grand edition *Victor Hugo illustré* of 1877--explicitly bringing the architect and novelist together in the recreation of the medieval cathedral.

The restoration of Notre-Dame as a Gothic icon was paralleled by major work on the city's Renaissance-style icon, the Hôtel de Ville. The need for renovation and enlargement of the municipal building came up in official discussions as early as the First Empire. Alice Thomine-Berrada's chapter tells of a series of architects (among them Victor Baltard) who developed proposals for alterations and additions (two new wings, doubling the surface)--always staying with the Renaissance model best suited to evoking a past of municipal power and glory. Construction work began in 1835 and continued under the Second Empire. Then the whole building burned down--in May 1871, under the embattled Commune. Viollet-le-Duc (again) presided over the jury deciding on a design for the replacement building. The Renaissance style was, more than ever, a way of giving the desired semblance of historical continuity and stability to the seat of municipal power. With that style as a given, the question became: how closely would the new building follow the model of the sixteenth-century original? The chosen architects reconstructed the building (inaugurated in 1882) with the additions made by their immediate predecessors, but they creatively made their own modifications, as Viollet-le-Duc had done with the Gothic on Notre-Dame.

The urban spaces *around* the featured buildings figure in a surprising number of the chapters in the book under review. The authors of those chapters--Florence Bourillon, Nicolas Lyon-Caen, Laurence Croq, Alain Cabantous, and Manuel Charpy--give us a vivid picture of the varied activities around the two buildings. The parallels are numerous. Both the Place de la Grève and

the Parvis de Notre-Dame were stages for displays of authority: processions, ceremonies, and fêtes. Both were popular gathering-and-strolling grounds. Both were sites of corporal punishments and executions (yes, the Parvis of Notre-Dame, too). And both were bustling market places with shops and hawkers of everything from food to *chiffons et ferrailles*--including, around Notre-Dame, a ready bevy of *filles de mauvaise vie*. Of course, there were also differences. One is that the Place de la Grève was not merely a street market like others, but also a riverside port as well as a place for hiring labor.

In the eighteenth century, proto-urbanists called for clearing out cramped, crowded areas and eliminating mundane commercial activities--the kind that occurred daily in the hundreds of shops and in the public spaces of the Cité. To be eliminated were the makeshift stands erected along the railings and walls of the cathedral as well as the houses on the bridges. The aim was to improve circulation and open up vistas, allowing important buildings to be viewed from a distance. The visionaries were designing a cityscape with a *longue-durée* sense of history. In place of quotidian buying and selling and the clutter of flimsy temporary structures, they conjured a city of stone and monumental architecture, set off by well-ordered public spaces.

Urbanist reformers were not the only ones who envisioned a more open, dignified cityscape. Decades before the restoration of Notre-Dame, artistic renderings of the cathedral depicted the building *without showing* the jumble of adjacent shops and markets--or the usual piles of trash. By the early twentieth century, the finally cleared surroundings made Notre-Dame look the way it had been pictured long before--as a beautiful grand monument.

Florence Bourillon's chapter puts a spotlight on the prefect Georges-Eugène Haussmann's works in the center: renovating the Cité as an administrative complex, improving circulation, and making the surroundings of the Hôtel de Ville "monumental." Like some of the other chapters, Bourillon's makes clear that the transformation did not proceed straightforwardly from an initial plan. Rather it was the result of work in stages. Plans changed as different actors--imperial authorities, diverse commissions, and public opinion--gained or lost influence and shifted priorities.

Woven through the history of the two Parisian institutions is a theme of democratization, at least for recent centuries. Clearly the municipal institution became more representative of the people than it was in its early times. And the services of Notre-Dame evolved to reflect the rise of commoners. During the early Revolution and under the Republics, the cathedral's *Te Deums* were held *for the nation* rather than for the king. But, while the two buildings ostensibly belonged to the people of Paris more than ever before, ironically the surrounding spaces were less and less open to everyday popular uses.

The last section of the book is devoted to the two buildings as symbols. Eric Fournier's paper is an imaginative study comparing the symbolisms of the burned-down Hôtel de Ville and the still-intact Notre-Dame after the defeat of the Paris Commune in May 1871. The ruins of the Hôtel de Ville stirred extraordinary interest both as a picturesque novel sight and as an emblem of the Communards' destructiveness. To some, it recalled an act of apocalyptic vengeance, wreaked upon a memory-site of betrayed revolutions; to others, it brought to mind the barbarian criminality of the rebels. In sum, the Hôtel de Ville enjoyed new prominence in the symbolic landscape of Paris. To offset it, the anti-Communard conservatives created a tale about Notre-Dame also being set afire but miraculously escaping destruction. With that story

they hoped to reaffirm the cathedral's status as the preeminent Parisian monument--venerable, majestic, and immortal.

The reconstructed Hôtel de Ville that was inaugurated in 1882 boasts a façade lined with new statues of "great men"--the municipality's answer to the gallery of kings on Notre-Dame. In addition, an equestrian statue of the most famous *prévôt des marchands*, Étienne Marcel, dominates a small square on the side of the building. Republicans revered the merchant leader as a precursor of the French Revolution, a bourgeois taking a stand against the monarchy and defending communal liberties. But why, Boris Bove asks, did the municipal council choose to have the city official depicted on horseback? And why facing Notre-Dame? The reasons center on Viollet-le-Duc again playing a decisive role, winning over the municipal council to his ideas. The choice of an equestrian statue was to highlight Marcel's patriotic defense of Paris as leader of a bourgeois militia against the dauphin's forces. His gaze toward Notre-Dame, Bove explains, expressed Viollet-le-Duc's hopes for a rapprochement of episcopal and municipal powers.

The final chapter examines the role of symbolic sites in the celebrations of the Liberation of Paris. On the joyous days of late August 1944, Charles de Gaulle kept to a minimum his appearances at the Hôtel de Ville and Notre-Dame. He did so, Jean-François Muracciole explains, because those two iconic buildings were so closely associated with monarchy, failed republics, and Pétainist collaborators. Instead he chose the Avenue des Champs-Élysées for an unprecedented rite of legitimation by the people. After re-lighting the flame at the Arc de Triomphe, General de Gaulle walked down the avenue in triumph, cheered by a throng of two million Parisians acclaiming the man who for four years had led "Free France."

This handsomely produced book is enhanced by numerous illustrations (maps, old photos, drawings, prints). And it abounds in copious footnotes, most of which cite archival documents as well as relevant books, articles, and the most recent research. The chapters, the work of specialists, may be too specialized and limited in scope for many readers, but the introduction and the conclusion provide excellent historical overviews, framing the seventeen disparate pieces.

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Charles Rearick
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
rearick@history.umass.edu

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