

# The 'Coupe Anatomique'

Diana Periton

## Introduction

In French popular literature of the later 19<sup>th</sup> C, such as illustrated newspapers, or the ubiquitous guides to and didactic histories of Paris, the section through the Parisian apartment block becomes a familiar image (see figs. 4 and 5). These sections reveal the anatomy of Paris at a glance. They use our understanding of the domestic interior, particularly the way it regulates activities and flows, to present a summary of the city through the ordering of its constituent elements.

A hybrid of the technical drawing that shows construction and infrastructure, and of an assembly of pictorial tableaux, they are seductively banal. Seductive, because they give us an overview of the normally hidden world of the interior, made miniature and caught between the pages of a book or magazine. Banal, because in doing so, its mysteries are laid bare. The systems that structure the city, from its social divisions to its networks of electricity conduits, are explicitly set out.

## 'Five floors of the Parisian world'

One of the best known of these popular sections, and possibly the earliest of its genre, is a 'coupe d'une maison parisienne', subtitled 'five floors of the Parisian world', which was first shown in the weekly newspaper *Illustration* in January 1845<sup>1</sup> (see P. 43 fig.1). It was billed there as a new year's present from the devil, an extract from a forthcoming volume of *Le Diable à Paris*, 'The Devil in Paris', which would appear in 1846<sup>2</sup>. Its author, the caricaturist Bertall, was one of a team of writers and illustrators, including Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier, Jules Janin, Gavarni and Grandville<sup>3</sup>, working, as the introduction to the volumes describes it, for a devil named Flammèche<sup>4</sup> (see fig. 2) to produce an animated encyclopaedia of Paris<sup>5</sup>.

Walter Benjamin describes books such as *Le Diable à Paris* as "panoramic literature"; they are assembled from individual sketches,

both visual and verbal, whose "anecdotal form .. corresponds to the plastic foreground of the panorama, .. their informational basis to its painted background"<sup>6</sup>. With Bertall's section, as with the panorama, we are given an overview and a close-up simultaneously. *Illustration* proposes that we use it to trace the "interior secrets" of the Parisian apartment building "with our finger [the rooms have been helpfully numbered] and with our eyes"<sup>7</sup>.

But the newspaper admits that the secrets the devil makes visible are not so much the "furious passions and bloody dramas" that we might have expected, even vaguely hoped for, in a such a revelation, as an account of "the different species that live there"<sup>8</sup>, species that vary from floor to floor, and that together constitute the Parisian world. Each species is coupled as if naturally with its habitat, and presented as an identifiable household type, linked to the others, but also differentiated from them, by the building that contains them.

These are types that *Illustration* feels confident to describe, as though they are fully familiar. On the ground floor, we read, the caretaker, a little over-excited, is dancing a mazurka with his wife, while mademoiselle their daughter plays something more like a sonata or a nocturne on the piano, with the kind of talent that will allow her to marry an elderly gentleman who has fallen on hard times. "On the first floor, we are yawning over the velvets and silks. This the old morale of marble halls. On the [next] .., we are less rich, and more awake"; but, we are warned, the virtue and happiness of this floor, the 'entente

cordiale', show but one not entirely dependable aspect of the race that occupies it, the 'bon bourgeoisie'. In the mansard, a man has just beaten his wife, and "a philosopher, a poet, perhaps, shelters his genius under a [home-made] .. dome in the ceiling ..."<sup>9</sup>.

Unlike *Illustration*, *Le Diable à Paris* sees no reason to discuss the image. Bertall's household types are simply another version of the caricatures of individual Parisian types, divided into species (armchair politicians, true Parisians, women swindlers etc.) who otherwise populate the books' illustrated pages, mostly by Gavarni, and their written vignettes, such as Balzac's 'Philosophy of Conjugal Life', which pokes fun at young bourgeois couples. Such apparently effortless satire might

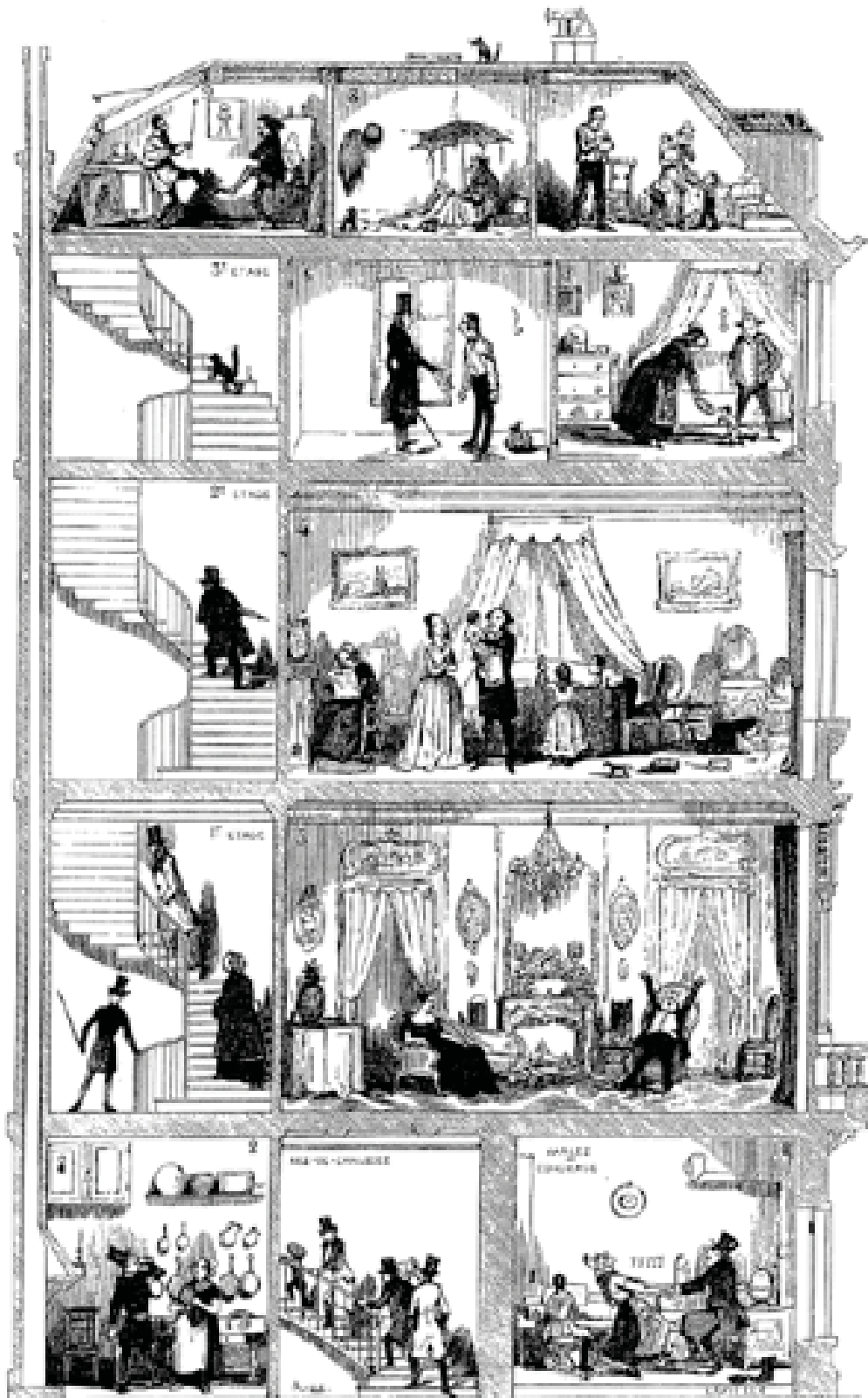


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Figure 2. Shelf no. 12352.g.30



PARIS COMIQUE.

Paris, le 1er Janvier.



COUPE D'UN IMMEUBLE PARISIEN, LE 1er JANVIER 1845.  
— Cinq étages de hauteurs égales. —

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seem to imply that a stable, familiar world is being described, but the books' prospectus tells us that in fact the different modes of description come together "to paint a physiognomy of [a]..world [which is] always new"<sup>10</sup>, a world in constant change. If the scenes and the characters appear commonplace, even predictable, it is largely because their presenters are working to make them so.

In another of Walter Benjamin's examples of 'panoramic literature', *Les français peints par eux-mêmes*, Jules Janin writes that "the Charter [of 1830, which brought in Louis-Philippe as a constitutional 'bourgeois king', and removed the aristocracy from government] has, as it were by enchantment, created among us an entirely new set of characters, of strange and incredible manners"<sup>11</sup>. French society, he declares, has become "an infinity of small republics", each with its own customs, faults, ambitions, etc., and "the more [it] .. has divided, the more difficult has its analysis become"<sup>12</sup>. It is the job of the "moralist"<sup>13</sup>, whether illustrator or writer, to attempt that analysis, to observe and describe, but also to deduce some kind of scheme or specification through which it might be ordered. For Bertall, that scheme is the framework of the Parisian apartment block.

Balzac emphasises the importance of being able to look from a distance, to see the whole, and to make sense of the detail, of being

"one of those sublime birds of prey who, while rising to high regions, have the gift of seeing clearly in matters here below, who can at the same time abstract and specify, make exact analyses and just syntheses"<sup>14</sup>.

His *Theory of Bearing*, a tongue-in-cheek study of people's physiognomy, repeatedly affirms its debt to the analytical taxonomies of the natural scientists which concentrate on that which can be observed objectively and tabulated. At the same time, it relies on the heritage of studies familiar to academic painters attempting to describe the manifestations of the passions in particular characters, characters whose attributes and behaviour derive from the plot or narrative that a painting depicts<sup>15</sup>. Balzac comments that in the past, "the caste system gave each person a physiognomy which was more important than the individual; today, the individual gets his physiognomy from himself"<sup>16</sup>. If the Ancien Régime had provided a narrative in which people knew how to carry themselves, post 1830 society needs the moralists' analysis but, more importantly, their suggested framework for synthesis, on order for its "new cast of characters"<sup>17</sup> to know what kind of behaviour to adopt.

Benjamin proposes that the 'informational basis' of 'panoramic literature', equivalent to the panorama's painted backdrop, is the extended "social study"<sup>18</sup>. But, despite its delight in classification, the caricature of *Le Diable à Paris* is not yet set against a sociological system; it does not yet categorize a sea of strangers according to externally identifiable qualities, as some of the earliest photographic studies of Parisian types of the mid-1850s seem to<sup>19</sup>. Bertall's section half pretends to look from a distance and catch

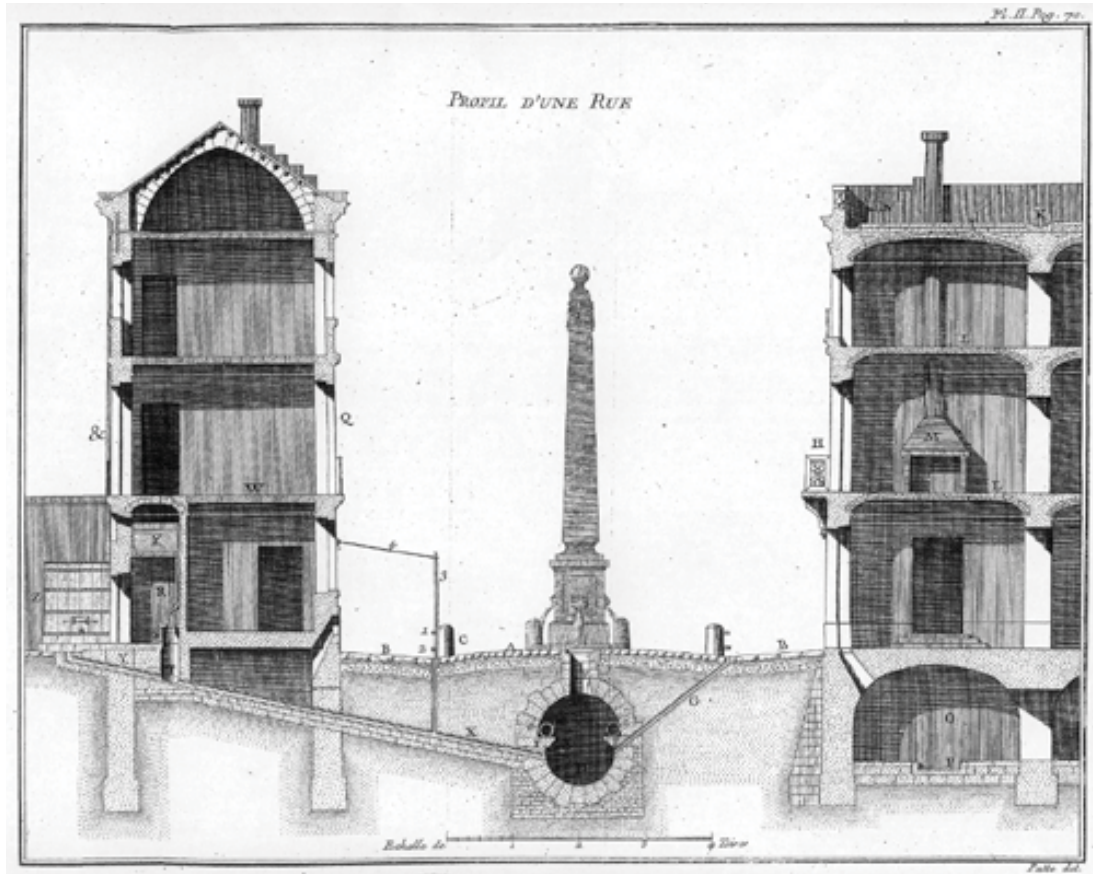
its subjects by surprise, in order to observe traits by which they can be ranked. In fact, though, the apparently spontaneous fit of species with habitat is a set of carefully worked tableaux which relies on an involvement with the society represented. It allows for a sense of complicity, of knowing where one has decided to stand within the rapidly fluctuating order of things. Bertall provides a table of synthesized household poses, ridiculed, but also idealised, by the distinctly urbane devil who reveals them to the reader. Benjamin comments that it is in this kind of literature that "for the last time the worker appears outside his class, as trimming for an idyll"<sup>20</sup>.

The analogy with the panorama suggests a spatializing scheme in which, from a particular viewpoint, foreground detail is arranged in relation to a distant, flattened but continuous background in order to give the appearance of totality. The medley of anecdotes of *Le Diable à Paris*, told from a worldly bourgeois viewpoint, depends not so much on a background flattened into the data of an 'informational basis' for its apparent completeness, as on the continuum which is Paris itself. Bertall's section does not show the city beyond the apartment building, nor does it need to for its presence to be palpable. It is Paris that generates the "infinity of small republics"<sup>21</sup> accommodated by the emerging apartment block of the 1840s, a building conceived in terms of purpose-built flats to be rented by the bourgeoisie, no longer a house occupied by its proprietors, nor a series of singly rented rooms (except in the trimming that is the mansard). Along with the building itself, Bertall's section explicitly spatializes these social structures, and, with Balzac's novels, begins to codify them. The cut that Bertall makes through the walls, schematically revealing balcony with columns and consoles, architraves and cornice, serves to solidify the tabulated decorum of the interiors. At the same time, it indicates implicitly a relation to the street; the city, not yet explicitly rendered into 'information', works reciprocally to produce the apartment block's scale, its generic classical ordering and the shifting social hierarchy that the building brings together.

### Profil d'une rue

The traditional architectural treatise, with its focus on the proportions of the orders and their profiles, then on the distribution and construction of individual buildings, also tends to take the city for granted<sup>22</sup>. It remains the seldom mentioned horizon within which such ordering takes place. Pierre Patte's *Mémoires sur les objets les plus importants de l'architecture* of 1769 sees this as a balance of priorities which needs to be altered. He hopes to look at architecture "dans le grand"<sup>23</sup>, by which he means starting explicitly with the city and the way it is put together before individual buildings or decoration can be discussed. His first chapter includes an engraving of the 'profil d'une rue', one of the earliest cross-sections of a street to be published<sup>24</sup> (see fig. 3).

Patte's book is written for the 18<sup>th</sup> C Parisian governing elite, in order to urge them consciously to analyse how



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a city should be constructed. As Condillac, Patte's contemporary, defined it, "analysis is the entire decomposition of an object and the arranging of its components so that generation becomes both easy and understandable"<sup>25</sup>. Patte uses his drawing to decompose the street, a section of the city, into a series of elements that can then be arranged to generate a new and ideal territory. If we allow our eye to move around the drawing by following the labelling system, for which Patte (unlike Bertall) provides a not entirely reliable key, it is in order to understand how each element of that territory functions with the next. Patte's ideal city is a system of instruments, designed to regulate the fire, water, filth and people that come into contact with it.

Patte frequently assures his readers that the aim of conceiving the city in this way is to ensure "the happiness of the inhabitants"<sup>26</sup>, to bring about a "genuine sense of well-being"<sup>27</sup>. But as he shows it, the city is unpeopled. It is not the nature of the inhabitants who will be regulated by it that he analyses<sup>28</sup>— he simply assumes that they have certain physiological reflexes (they go to the loo; they avoid vehicular traffic, and don't like to get wet). Presumably they constitute the prehistoric undifferentiated society that Benjamin almost sees unearthed by modernity, noble savages for whom "virtue is superfluous"<sup>29</sup> (and specific physiognomy irrelevant). Patte, acting he hopes together with the Marquis de Marigny, Louis

XV's minister for building, to whom the book is dedicated, produces his section in the manner of a Rousseauian legislator who has deduced the will of 'the people', and dreams of using the fabric of the city to impose it on them.

As a regulatory machine, though, Patte's street is somewhat partial, uneven. The section is built up from a series of imagined real-life episodes<sup>30</sup>, usually disasters that have been avoided – the spilled wine from a broken barrel that can be collected in a special pit, the falling tile that settles in the gutter rather than maiming someone below, the dangerously unclean blood from butchers' shops that miraculously disappears into the drain, if it is not banished from the city altogether. Even though this is his basis, Patte emphasises the importance of working, not like a mason, according to the shifting precedent of practice, but as what he describes as a philosopher, establishing principles that can be adopted in any situation<sup>31</sup>. His crisis management anecdotes are the basis from which, critique by critique, he derives principles for the way a city should perform. Once the array of principles has been fully established, the city will operate as a system of components that reject the disordered present, and bring about instead a universal, ordered future<sup>32</sup>.

Patte's analysis generates a section that empties the public space of the street of everyday chaos. The



unimpeded circulation of people, vehicles, water and sewage means that it can be instantly evacuated. Thus the components allow for the perfect geometric synthesis of Patte's ideal, a space whose width and height form an exact square, brought into static focus by an obelisk-cum-fountain whose tip marks the apex of an equilateral triangle; a street centred between the balconies of the 'étage noble', between the celestial globe at the top of the obelisk and the mid-point of the black orifice of the sewer. The existing city is, for Patte, the work of a devil. After reeling off the litany of disasters that constantly threaten it, Patte asks:

"which of us would not imagine that it must be an evil genie, an enemy of the human race, who has forced men to live together [in such a way]..?"<sup>33</sup>.

His drawing sucks this devil into the underworld, to leave the way for his haunting vacuum of well-being.

### Hausmannian interlude

In Patte's section, the tangible reality of the mechanisms of the everyday is indicated by perpetual shadow. The interiors of the buildings are trapped amongst the foreground of components that separate real from ideal. Their half-light helps to ensure and to frame a realm of eternal poise, without time or depth. The drawing shows means and ends starkly, crudely overlaid. If the distance that separates them is ever to be fully mediated, and thus overcome, Patte calls for a "total plan", complete with contour lines"<sup>34</sup>, an overview "sufficiently detailed to bring together all the local circumstances"<sup>35</sup>. He knows it will be necessary to have the genuinely panoramic vision of Balzac's bird of prey – or perhaps of the devil Flammèche, not confined to the underworld for long – if the system of components is to be complete, and the leap between real and ideal is to be collapsed into a single,

apparently continuous actuality.

This was the panoramic vision that Haussmann instigated for Paris once he became its prefect in 1852. His 'Service du plan' was charged with producing a fully triangulated 1:500 map of the entire city, which served as what might now without question be called the 'informational basis' for Paris' transformation. Using Patte's techniques of analysis, distant view and particular, material detail, ends and means, were constantly brought together as labourers tunnelled through clay and gravel and shifted stone to roll out the regulating machine of Patte's street, constantly refined<sup>36</sup>.

For witnesses such as Gautier, the incessant attempt to move from chaos to order meant glimpses of a "curious spectacle, these open houses, their floorboards suspended over the abyss, their colourful .. flowered wallpaper still marking the shape of the rooms", houses whose "high walls, striped with the swarthy streaks of chimney flues, reveal, like an architectural section, the mystery of intimate distributions"<sup>37</sup>. Such formerly 'real' interiors became, in the 1:500 overview, mere moments of obstruction representing outdated forms of domestic ordering. They gave way to their counterparts in the construction of the ideal: technical sections, repeated to infinity in the networks of roads, sewers, water and gas supply of Haussmann's homogeneous diffusion of well-being<sup>38</sup>.

### The hybrid section

It is not until the 1880s that a hybrid of Patte's technical section and Bertall's 'Five floors of the Parisian world' appears, featured in popular literature (see figs. 4 and 5). The city that, for Bertall, was



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implicitly there, generating the fluid social hierarchies accommodated in its interiors, has become after Haussmann's upheavals a metropolis consciously constructed through a complex interplay of networks, distributing 'the people', now anonymous, their provisions and their waste. In these images, it seems that the relationship of interior to street must be visibly articulated, to demonstrate that they are strongly differentiated, separately codified components of a continuous system of regulation. The city here is synthesized not by a notion of society, centred on the bourgeoisie, but by its elaborate infrastructure, which links and operates on all those who come within its remit.

The first of these engravings (fig. 4) is printed in a book dedicated in 1886 to the municipality of Paris, a solid coffee-table book called *The Art of the Garden*<sup>49</sup>. It heads the final chapter, a eulogy to the 'Service des Promenades', the department set up by Haussmann to re-brand the city as a continuous promenade of streets, squares and parks, calculated for aesthetic effects – a never-ending pleasure garden of sensations. Ernouf, the book's author, otherwise a prolific writer of books on popular science, describes how they have had

"to build, to rebuild, to level these roadways and pavements, position the trees [109,330 of them]<sup>40</sup>, choose their perfumes, ... find systems to keep them alive"; they have had "to determine the spacing of the lampposts, improve on their design ..., set out benches, produce prototypes for kiosks, remake everything involved in the profile of the street"<sup>41</sup>.

In so doing, they have created an infrastructure that does much more than evacuate filth and ease circulation. It controls not only quantifiable flows, but also views, smells, light and shade.

Alert to the "legitimate aspirations of democracy"<sup>42</sup>, the city of Paris has used the street to make the art of the garden accessible to 'the people', to ensure the "just distribution of air, light and greenery"<sup>43</sup>. For Ernouf, these streets, these 'sections of the city' are one of reality's greatest seductions<sup>44</sup>; he is sure that many violent conspiracies and miserable thoughts have been abandoned, soothed away by the "elegance, health and luxury" of Paris' promenades<sup>45</sup>. Through the art of the garden, the street has become the ultimate regulator, in tune with the "psychological evolution"<sup>46</sup> of the people.

George Sand describes Paris' streets as a "ravishing invention", where it is "a blessing to stroll along a wide pavement, listening to nothing, looking at nothing", transported into an introspective yet receptive "ambulatory reverie"<sup>47</sup>. Ernouf's 'psychological evolution' has led, in Sand, to a state in which the city, by becoming a continuous journey, can always be held at a distance. Benjamin makes this explicit in his focus on the panoramas; in them, he writes, "the city dilates to become a landscape, as it does in a subtler way for the flâneur"<sup>48</sup>. It is flattened out, and always beyond reach. If the city is conceived as a system of

spatially differentiated components, linked together in a network, it requires either an overview or movement through that network for the elements to appear to cohere<sup>49</sup>.

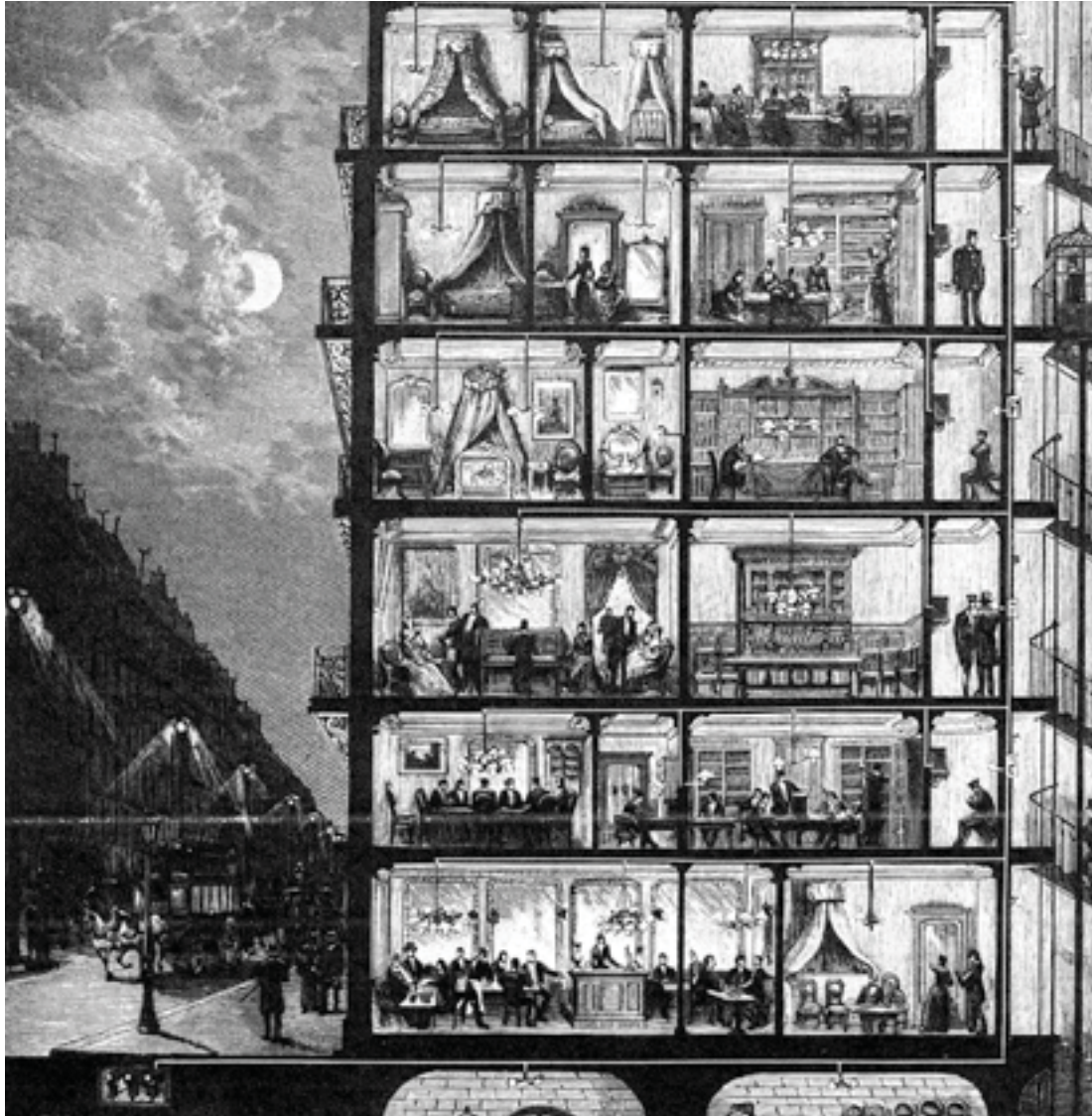
The engraving in *The Art of the Garden* provides both. Rather than implying the calm seduction that Ernouf describes, or the rhythm of the flâneur, the image pulls the viewer sharply forward through its harsh perspective. Its vantage point is that of a low flying bird, or of the traveller on the top deck of an over-tall tram. There is a palpable sense of speed, imparted partly by the visible traffic, partly by the way the engraver has manipulated the dissolution of detail, and partly by the sudden introduction of the cut, which brings it up short<sup>50</sup>.

The engraving is labelled as a section through the boulevard St. Germain, and its rendering is uncannily accurate, suggesting that it must partly have been copied from a photograph – a 'cliché', or a slice through time in a particular place. It is the only one of the sections considered here which is specifically located, but its specificity, rather than working to capture the distinct qualities of that place, shows all such moments, all such cuts, to be essentially the same<sup>51</sup>. The relationship of overview to detail, the panoramic scope that moves directly from general to specific, has itself become generic. The section is simply one of an endless series of possible slices, through which the space of the street is captured as space to be travelled, through the abstract mechanical succession of moments<sup>52</sup>.

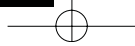
The perspective pulls us in, but the cut itself holds us back, keeping the city out of reach. We peer into the world that it reveals from the outside, as if we are looking into an animated model, an elaborate mechanical dolls' house. The second of these engravings (fig. 5) shows the movement of the street continued, even intensified, in the interiors. Rather than transition through space, though, it condenses as the movement of constant activity. The section is from an 1891 edition of the popular monthly journal the *Magasin Pittoresque*, where it illustrates an article explaining the advantages that 'électricité chez soi' can bring<sup>53</sup>. Once electricity is allowed to flow into the home, rooms are no longer Patte's shadowy spaces, caught up amongst the components of the machine, but a series of luminous boxes that are fully part of it, tableaux brought to life by the infrastructure that assures them.

Whereas in Bertall's Parisian world the scenes were animated by the personalities of the different household types, here the inhabitants are more like automata. They are differentiated, not by Bertall's modulation social bearing that permits them to yawn, dance a jig, or tease the dog, but by the way the interior files them according to what, productively, they do. Well after dark, the plug-in dolls of the mezzanine hold important meetings – perhaps the annual meeting of the directors of the electricity company – without suffocating from the heat of gaslights. Further up the building, they study avidly with no tiring to the eyes, or





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make dresses and artificial flowers that it is then the role of the dolls of the first floor to display – for their attire, by electric light, “loses nothing of its delicacy of tone”<sup>54</sup>. The regulating machinery that is the city has extended into the interior, and has even begun to commandeer the inhabitants; Bertall’s characters are here transformed into components of Patte’s mechanism, caught up and involved in its efficient circulation of production and consumption.

Back on the boulevard St. Germain, the automata check that the sewers are flowing freely, and shop. At the moment when the endless movement is deflected sideways into the apartment block, it slows, and the space begins to congeal. The characters, barely visible, seem conspiratorial or self-absorbed (see details in figs. 6 and 7). Caught randomly within the array of dark boxes, Patte’s half-light now inhabited, they turn away from the cut that exposes them in its moment of reportage. It is as if the interior has managed to hold the city at bay, allowing its inhabitants a moment of respite in which they might even plot against its relentless distribution of well-being.

### Conclusion

These hybrid images of the 1880s and 90s showed the readers of popular literature, the ever-growing bourgeoisie, the anatomy of their new metropolis<sup>55</sup>. Enthusiastic and didactic in intent, the drawings are both mimetic and analytic. They show familiar settings – the domestic interior, the café, the street – depicted through standard pictorial realism, to represent a recognisable way of life. These are overlaid with a technical section that indicates the means by which that way of life is assembled. If the drawings seem fitting, as though the fully realised Haussmannian lifestyle almost demands this kind of representation, it is because the city is to some extent already understood in the manner in which the sections show it – as a series of codified,

spatially articulated components, panoramically conceived and brought together in a system that regulates the constant flows of people, their provisions and their waste. These flows, and their differentiating regulation, constitute the city’s version of well-being.

The sections serve to emphasize the solid containment of the interiors; we can see the thickness of floors and walls. Where Bertall and Patte showed cuts through windows, these drawings protect the interior by more careful filtering, effected by pipes and conduits emerging from below the ground. At the same time, though, the sections abuse that containment. They give us an illicit overview

of that which can normally only be imagined, the simultaneous lives of the inhabitants, and the hidden links between them. Our fantasies are presented not as Bertall’s caricature, nor as Patte’s polemic, but as technically, architecturally assured reality.

The drawings summarize that reality because we know what it is to participate in its structures, in its divisions and its fluidity. But they also give us the view of an outsider for whom everything has simultaneously been brought to visibility, and who can then begin to call its solid certainty into question. We become

complicit in seeing its walls taken over by what one of the journals described as:

“this circulation of hot and cold water, of steam, of gas, of air, of electricity, which snakes its way from the top to the bottom of ... our houses in the same way that arteries run through the human body, animating [them] with a .. mysterious life force”<sup>56</sup>.

In the conflation of real and ideal that the sections depict, the fascination that the overview provides is twinned with an unease that it may not be our involvement in the world they show that generates its synthesis. The drawings themselves frame it, hold it at a distance. They demonstrate that it is conceived as a system to which we relate partly as detached outsiders, and partly by conforming to it, as mere parts in its mechanism. Despite their instant, easy familiarity, these images suggest an anxiety that the continuity and order they show might in fact be produced by an abstract, even sinister power, as if the



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Figure 6. Detail of Figure 4.



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Figure 7. Detail of Figure 4.



urbane devil Flammèche controls the entire display.

*This article appeared previously in Volume 9 of the Journal of Architecture 2004. We would like to thank the editors of the journal for permission to reproduce it, and also the British Library for permission to reproduce the images here.*

<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1843, *Illustration* was directed at a bourgeois Parisian audience.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Diable à Paris*, Paris: J. Hetzel, 1845 and 1846. The image was published again in 1852, in Edmond Texier's *Tableaux de Paris*.

<sup>3</sup> Writers also include Alfred de Musset, Gérard de Nerval, Alphonse Karr, Léon Gozlan, George Sand, F. Soulié, Eugène Sue, Jules Janin. Grandville's engravings appear only in the second pair of volumes, published in 1867.

<sup>4</sup> Flammèche is introduced as a distant cousin to the devil Asmodeus, made familiar by the endless reprints of *Le Diable Boîteux*, by Le Sage, first published in 1707. Asmodeus teaches a young Spanish student the ways of the world by sharing with him the power to see through the roofs of Madrid's houses, and thus to witness the lives conducted inside. The earliest engraved sections in the popular press, from the 1840s, are invariably accompanied by a reference to Asmodeus.

<sup>5</sup> "Le livre ... a été conçu d'après un plan qui nous semble plus conforme à la nature si vivante et si animée de Paris ... [C'est] un tableau varié, complet et dramatique de la vie et les moeurs ...

"Qu'est-il besoin de démontrer la nécessité de diviser le travail quand la matière est divisée? Quelle est l'encyclopédie qui n'a qu'un seul auteur? ... Il faudrait donc être tout à la fois poète, historien, philosophe, publiciste, antiquaire, physiologiste, peintre, moraliste, architecte, commerçant, savant, érudit, etc.etc., ou, pour mieux dire, il faudrait être le Diable en personne, avoir à sa disposition la baguette d'Asmodée". J. Hetzel, prospectus to *Le Diable à Paris*, 1845.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Benjamin, 'Paris, Capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> C', in *Reflections*, ed. Peter Demetz, New York: Schocken Books, 1986, p. 149. This is from the version of the essay written in 1935. By 1939, when Benjamin re-wrote it as the introduction to the *Passagen-Werk*, the section on the panorama has disappeared.

<sup>7</sup> *L'Illustration*, 11 January 1845, p. 294.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> "... pour peindre une physionomie ... de ce monde toujours nouveau", J. Hetzel, *Le Diable à Paris*, prospectus.

<sup>11</sup> Jules Janin, introduction to *Les français peints par eux-mêmes*, Paris: L. Curmer, 1840, translated as *Pictures of the French*, London, Wm. S. Orr and Co., 1840, p. xvii. The titles explicitly mentioned in Benjamin's list of 'panoramic literature' are *Le Diable à Paris*, *Les français peints par eux-mêmes*, *La grande ville* and *Le livre des cent-et-un*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiii-xiv.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

<sup>14</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Théorie de la Démarche*, Paris: Editions Bossard, 1922, p. 148, translated in Judith Wechsler, *A Human Comedy: Physiognomy and Caricature in 19<sup>th</sup> C Paris*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1982, p. 22. Balzac writes on the next page that: "It is necessary to be at the same time as patient as were Muschenbrock and Spellanani [microscopists, discoverers of micro-organisms] ... then one must also possess that 'coup d'oeil' which makes phenomena converge to a center, that logic that arranges them in columns, that perspicacity which sees and deduces, that slowness which serves to never discover one of the points of a circle without observing the others, and that promptitude which goes in one leap from the feet to the head" (translated in Wechsler, op. cit.,

p.178).

<sup>15</sup> Wechsler emphasizes the influence on Balzac of Lavater's *L'Art de connaître les hommes par la physionomie*, Paris, 1806-9. Lavater's drawings borrow heavily from the painter Le Brun, whose rules for expressing the passions in painting were set out in his *Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les passions proposée dans une conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière*, 1698.

<sup>16</sup> Balzac, *Une fille d'Eve*, translated in Peter Brooks, 'The Text of the City', *Oppositions* vol. 8, 1977, pp. 7-11.

<sup>17</sup> Janin, as above.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Benjamin, from the *Passagen-Werk*, translated as *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press, 1999, p. 531.

<sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Disdéri's *Types photographiques*, 1853, in which, as Barthes puts it, image is clearly dissociated from consciousness (**Roland Barthes, Camera Lucida, ...**).

The exposure time of a photograph became just short enough to allow for portraits in the early 1840s, but the portrait photo did not become standard until the mid-1850s – see Shelley Rice, *Parisian Views*, M.I.T. 1997. Bertall himself turned to portrait photography in 1855.

<sup>20</sup> Benjamin, 'Paris, Capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> C', *Reflections*, p. 150.

<sup>21</sup> Janin, as above.

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance, Jacques-Francois Blondel's *Cours d'architecture ou traité*, 1771-1777, which Patte, as Blondel's student, completed after his death. It includes a couple of examples of specific urban settings, almost urban rooms, but does not discuss the city as a whole.

<sup>23</sup> Pierre Patte, *Mémoires sur les objets les plus importants de l'architecture*, Paris: Rozet, 1769, 'épitre' and p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> Antoine Picon, *French Engineers and Architects in the Age of Enlightenment*, trans. Martin Thom, Cambridge: C.U.P., 1992, p. 198, says that it is "one of the very first cross sections of a street".

<sup>25</sup> Condillac, *Cours d'études*, quoted by Antoine Picon in "Architecture, Science, Technology", in *The Architecture of Science*, eds. Peter Galison and Emily Thomson, Cambridge, MA.: M.I.T. Press, 1999, p. 319.

<sup>26</sup> Patte, op. cit., pp. 7 ("je montrerai comment il seroit à propos de disposer une Ville pour le bonheur de ses habitants") and 59.

<sup>27</sup> Patte, 'épitre' and p. 5 ("... pour procurer un véritable bien-être aux hommes").

<sup>28</sup> See Francoise Choay, *The Rule and the Model*, Cambridge, MA.: M.I.T. Press, 1997, p. 218 for a discussion of Patte's utopia as technical in its understanding of the ideal, rather than ethical.

<sup>29</sup> Benjamin, 'Paris, Capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> C', *Reflections*, p. 148. Benjaomin is actually discussing Fourier's phalanstery, not Patte's ideal city: "In the dream in which, before the eyes of each epoch, that which is to follow appears in images, the latter appears wedded to elements from prehistory, that is, of a classless society ... This state of affairs is discernible in Fourier's utopia. Its chief impetus comes from the advent of machines ... His phalanstery is supposed to lead men back to conditions in which virtue is superfluous".

<sup>30</sup> Picon talks of Patte's "fragmentary applications .. whose occasionally incongruous character calls to mind the scenes of a writer such as Raymond Roussel, with their sequence of absurd situations ... the *Mémoires* frequently lapsed, somewhat surprisingly, into anecdote." See *French Architects and Engineers*, p. 200.

<sup>31</sup> Patte, 'épitre' ("on a vu sans cesse les objets en Maçon, tandis qu'il eût fallu les envisager en Philosophe") and p. 7 ("par l'application des principes que j'aurais établis").

<sup>32</sup> "He announces the realm of order that will succeed the realm of disorder and of chance, a tomorrow that will forever negate yesterday and today", Choay, op. cit. p. 218.

<sup>33</sup> Patte, op. cit., p. 5 ("Qui ne croiroit, en voyant le tableau effrayant de tous ces désastres, qu'un génie mal-faisant et ennemi du genre humain, n'ait été le moteur de la reunion des hommes dans les Cités?").



<sup>34</sup> This is Choay's shorthand, see op. cit., p. 219 – in the case of Paris, Patte "conceives of the city for the first time as a holistic object and advocates its rectification by means of a specific instrument: the 'total plan', complete with contour lines".

<sup>35</sup> Patte, p. 63 ("un plan général suffisamment détaillé, qui rassemblerait toutes les circonstances locales, tant de son emplacement que de ses environs").

<sup>36</sup> For instance, in the 1840s, the sewers had grown at a respectable rate of 5 kms per year; in the 1850s and '60s, they speeded along at a remarkable 35 kms per year. See Emile Gerards, *Paris Souterrain*, Paris: Garnier Frères, 1908, pp. 487 & 489.

<sup>37</sup> Théophile Gautier, "Mosaïque de ruines", in *Paris et les Parisiens*, a selection of essays (no doubt 'panoramic literature') by Alexandre Dumas, Arsène Houssaye, Paul de Musset, etc., with engravings by Eugène Lami, Gavarni, etc., Paris: Morizot, 1856, pp. 38-39. The passage is quoted by Benjamin in *The Arcades Project*, p. 95. I have made my own translation.

<sup>38</sup> Choay, in her introduction to Baron Haussmann's *Mémoires*, Paris: Seuil, 2000, p. 11, speaks of "un principe de 'justice distributive'".

<sup>39</sup> Baron Ernouf, *L'Art des jardins*, Paris: J. Rothschild, 1886. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the book. Its first two printings, of 1868 and 1872 were much less grand, handy volumes to put in your pocket. This edition is completely reworked, with the involvement of Alphand, head of the 'Service des Promenades' under Haussmann.

After the unpeavals of 1870, there was a huge increase in book production in France. The publishing houses "broadened their range, simultaneously issuing books of popular science, contemporary fiction, classics, presentation books and *curiosa*", Rolf Söderberg, *French Book Illustration 1880-1905*, Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1977, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 350.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 346.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 'avant-propos de l'éditeur', J. Rothschild, p. x.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 326.

<sup>44</sup> Ernouf, op. cit., p. 345.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 347 & 352.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>47</sup> George Sand in *Paris-Guide par les principaux écrivains et artistes de la France*, A. Lacroix, Verbroeckhoven: Brussels, Leipzig and Livorno, pp. 1196 and 1199.

<sup>48</sup> Benjamin, 'Paris, Capital of the 19th C', *Reflections*, p. 150.

<sup>49</sup> See Robin Evans, 'Figures, Doors and Passages', in *Translations from Drawing to Building*, p. 78: "A compartmentalized building had to be organised by the movement through it, because movement was the one remaining thing that could give it coherence".

<sup>50</sup> The image was drawn by Charles Fichot (1817-1903), painter, architect and lithographer. He was known mostly for his engravings of monuments and churches in Paris and the Aube, valued for their high level of accuracy. See *Inventaire des Fonds Français après 1800*, Jean Adhémar and Jacques Lethève, Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1954.

An article in the *Magasin Pittoresque* of 31 Mai 1891, "Les paysages animés en photographie", pp. 92-3, discusses a new process of juxtaposing photographs with different depths of field developed in England, to try to give photographed landscapes more vividness, to make them less flat. It concludes that engravings and paintings still have an advantage over the camera's 'servile copies' by being able to manipulate depth through detail at will.

<sup>51</sup> The photographer Marville, employed by the Ville de Paris to record the transformations of the city, made a portrait photograph of the same stretch of the boulevard in 1877. Marville's photograph is taken from close to ground level, with a long exposure time, capturing only that which visibly endures. As in Patte's ideal, that which circulates disappears. The solid specificity of buildings is the necessary counterpart, the necessary differentiation, to preserve the homogeneity of

the stilled space and light the perfect street contains.

<sup>52</sup> See Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 1 – L'image-mouvement*, Paris: Minuit 1983, pp. 9-14.

<sup>53</sup> Founded in 1833 by saint-simonian Edouard Charton, the *Magasin Pittoresque* was originally a 'journal à deux sous', directed towards the provincial petite bourgeoisie. "C'est un vrai magasin que nous sommes proposé d'ouvrir à toutes les curiosités. Décrire tout ce qui mérite de fixer l'attention et les regards, tout ce qui offre un sujet intéressant de reverie, de conversation ou d'étude", *Magasin Pittoresque*, first edition.

<sup>54</sup> *Le Magasin Pittoresque*, 31 May 1891, p. 157.

<sup>55</sup> If these sections show a much more uniform society than Bertall articulates, that is because the non-bourgeois workers have largely been evacuated from the city. At the panoramic scale, they might be visible in plan, clustered round its edges. In such a plan, they would not be visible as figures, let alone characters, only as potentially codifiable areas.

<sup>56</sup> J. Henrivaux, "Une maison de verre", *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 novembre 1898. This article advocates building houses entirely in glass, not yet in order to bring complete transparency – the glass is coloured – but so as to differentiate the components of the system by giving them different intensities of colour and light.

