

Baron Haussmann and the modernization of Paris



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Georges-Eugène Haussmann

- Lived 27 March 1809 – 11 January 1891.
- Studied Law and then rapidly advanced in the civil service.
- Became the prefect of Seine in 1853
- Worked in close collaboration with Napoleon III on the Renovation of Paris
- Not an architect or urban planner
- Never officially a Baron



Reasons for Modernization



- From 1800 to 1850 the population doubled to over one million
- In 1850 the majority of Paris was still the medieval style of unplanned narrow winding streets.
- The open gutters used for carrying sewage was a breeding ground for disease.
- Narrow streets easy to barricade
- Napoleon III was inspired by trip to London to modernise the city.

The plan

Haussmann embarked on on a radical project of urban design to rebuild Paris as a modern city. The project included...

- Sewer system
- Wide Boulevards
- Gas lighting
- Public Building regulations
- Monuments
- Updated Facade
- A reorganized symmetrical road system
- Parks
- Division of Paris into arrondissements (Districts) and its expansion

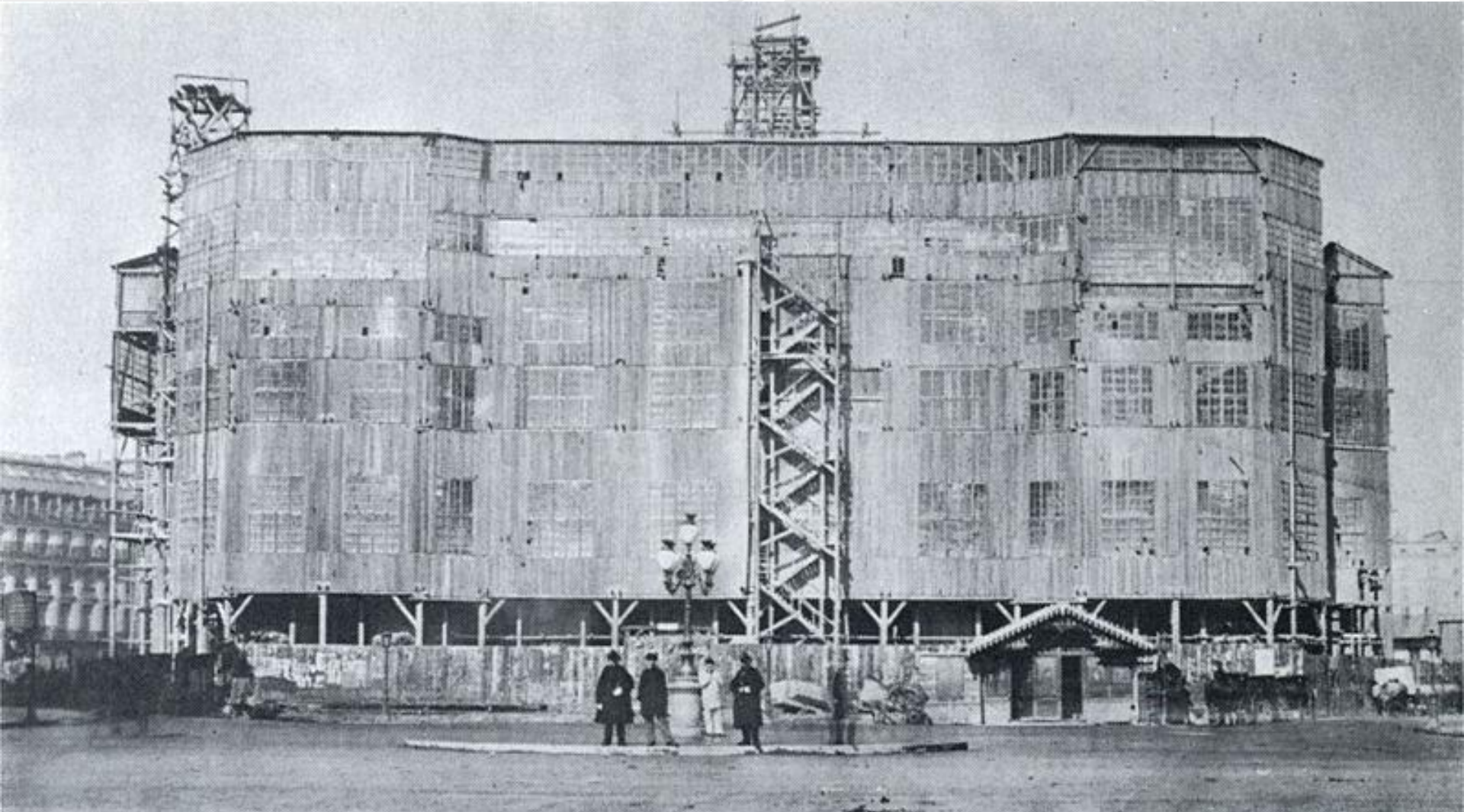
Avenue de L'opera

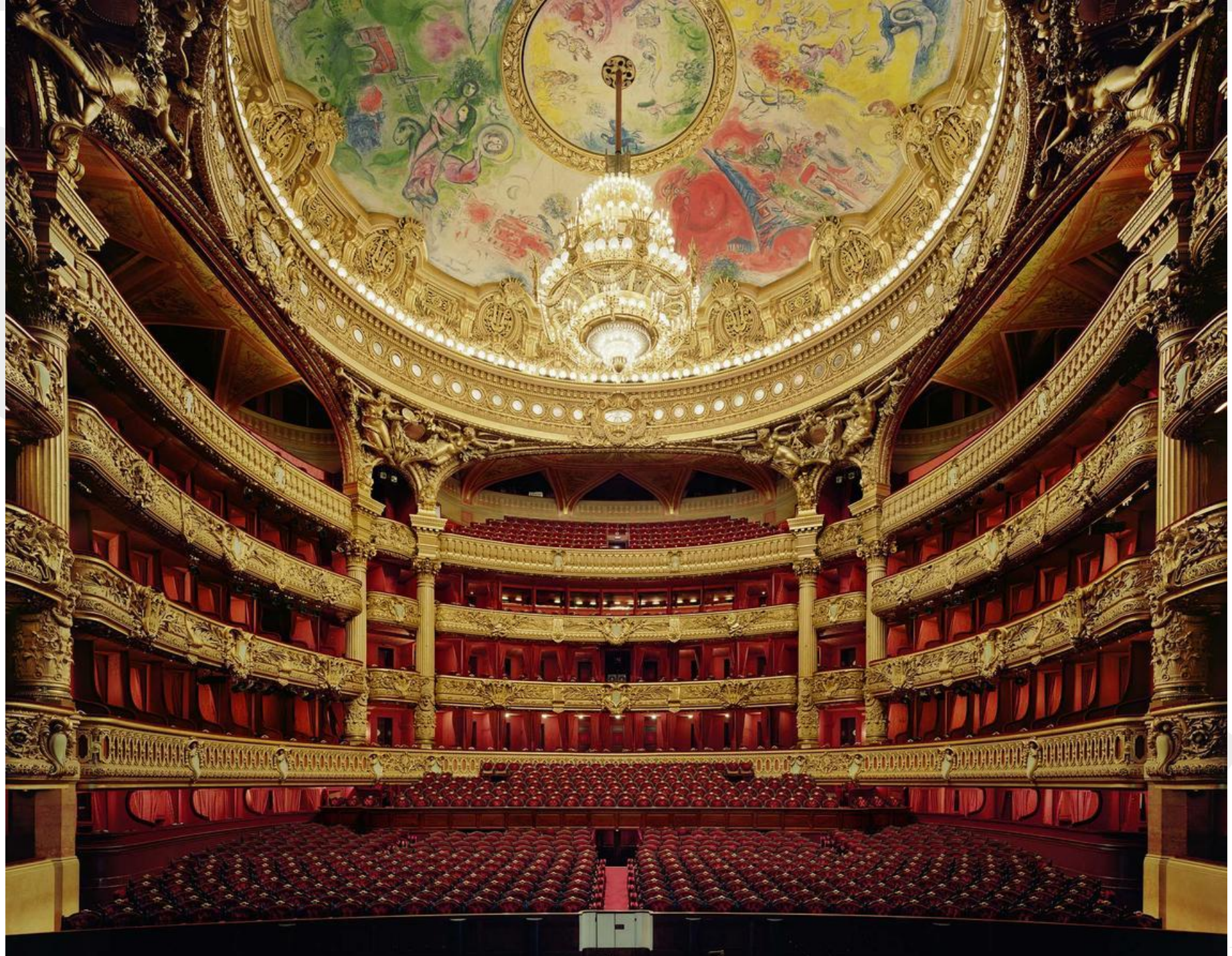


Avenue de L'opera Modern



Construction of palais garnier





Roads



- Haussmann brought symmetry to the city
- The new streets were laid out in a grid running east to west north to south with diagonal connections radiating out
- Perhaps most importantly the wide avenues would be hard to barricade and allow fast access for troops.
- The construction and widening of streets required the expropriation and demolition of many buildings

Sewers

- Pre-Haussmann: Bruneseau's underground system intermixed sanitary and unsanitary water
- Miasma to Germ Theory
- Haussmann engineered a new underground sewer system: separation of drinking water and waste
- Iron piping and digging techniques from Industrial Revolution
- Became a tourist attraction post-sanitation
- In 1878, the system expanded to 360 miles long

1859 below the Rue Royale



Facade of Buildings

- The city was rebuilt with a neoclassical facade
- The widening of the streets allowed for extra height to be added to the buildings increasing living space
- Typically five stories
- Elaborate balcony on second floor
- Shops on bottom level



Gustave Caillebotte-Paris Street; Rainy Day
1877



End of career & legacy

- The man who destroyed Old Paris, or the man who created New Paris?
- Career ended on January 5, 1870
 - Scapegoat to Napoleon
 - Heavy spending: 2.5 billion francs
 - equivalent to over 70 billion francs in modern currency
 - "Haussmannomania" & "Haussmannization"
 - Parisians' response: never ending construction, concern for debt, distrust in initial budgeting
- destroyed 20,000 buildings and erected 30,000 new ones.
- Estimated transformation of 60% of buildings
- "Second Empire reforms"
- Died from Tuberculosis in 1891
- Improvements in Paris: disease lessened, traffic improved, quality of life improved

