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Contested Territory: Regional Development in France, 1934-1968

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ECOLE DOCTORALE

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

CONTESTED TERRITORY
Regional Development in France, 1934-1968

Matthew Wendeln

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For Julia

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ABSTRACT

Titre: Le Territoire contesté, l'aménagement du territoire en France, 1934-1968

Résumé: Cette thèse examine le rôle de l'aménagement du territoire dans le bouleversement de la géographie industrielle en France d'après-guerre. En associant une perspective nationale et des cas d'étude, elle étudie une tension fondamentale: la décentralisation des usines a apporté de nouveaux emplois à des régions pauvres, mais a également miné le pouvoir de la classe ouvrière parisienne et créé un kaléidoscope de nouvelles inégalités géographiques. Trois chapitres analysent les rapports complexes entre les projets de « containment » urbain, de préservation rurale et de modernisation keynésienne de 1934 à 1955. Nous examinons la décentralisation des industries de guerre, les plans gouvernementaux pour désindustrialiser la région parisienne et les conflits autour de la main-d'œuvre provinciale lors de l'industrialisation. Un chapitre aborde ensuite les bases institutionnelles et discursives du vaste programme de redistribution régionale entamé en 1955, et le suivant interroge le rôle de la décolonisation dans les débats sur les inégalités régionales en France. La nouvelle industrialisation rurale est traitée à travers l'étude du cas de l'usine Citroën de Rennes, depuis l'effort d'expansion municipale, jusqu'au recrutement d'anciens paysans et la dénonciation dans la communauté d'une direction autoritaire. La conclusion analyse trois mutations industrielles: la décroissance parisienne, l'industrialisation tayloriste en province et les nouvelles économies métropolitaines. Ce travail se situe au carrefour de recherches en sciences sociales — sur la géographie industrielle et la gouvernance territoriale — et en histoire de l'industrie, du travail, de l'urbanisme et des politiques économiques.

Mots-clés: aménagement du territoire, urbanisme, économie régionale, géographie industrielle, industrie, politique économique, France – histoire – XXe siècle, Rennes

Title: Contested Territory: Regional Development in France, 1934-1968

Abstract: This thesis shows how government intervention shaped the remapping of industry and population in postwar France. Combining a national perspective with local case studies, it analyzes the regional development programs organized around the new conceptual framework of *aménagement du territoire.* I address a core tension: industrial decentralization was a Keynesian social policy, which brought new jobs to impoverished areas, but it also undercut the power of Parisian labor and created a kaleidoscope of new regional inequalities. Three chapters trace the complex relationships between projects of urban "containment," rural preservation, and new ideals of Keynesian modernization from 1934 to 1955. I examine the decentralization of defense industries, programs to deindustrialize Paris, and battles to control provincial labor markets during new development. The following two chapters address, respectively, the institutional and discursive bases of redistributive regional policies and the role of decolonization in shaping debates on inequalities in France. Next, I take the Citroën car factory built in Rennes, Brittany, as a case study of new rural industrialization—from Rennes' pro-growth municipal politics to the company's recruitment of peasant workers and the community's contestation of its new employer. A concluding chapter covers key shifts in French industry during the 1960s: Parisian contraction, branch-plant expansion, and new high-tech metropolises. This dissertation is at the junction of social science research—on industrial geography and territorial governance—and the history of French industry and labor, urban policy, and state economic intervention.

Keywords: regional development, regional planning, urban policy, economic policy, industry, industrial location, France–history–20th century, Rennes (France)

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	Action Catholique Ouvrière
ADH	Archives départementales de l'Hérault
ADIV	Archives départementales d'Ille-et-Vilaine
ADM	Archives départementales du Morbihan
AMR	Archives municipales de Rennes
AN	Assemblée nationale
ARC	Action régionaliste corse
BEI	Bureau d'études industrielles
BHMF	Bibliothèque historique Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie
CAC	Centre des archives contemporaines
CAEF	Centre des archives économiques et financières
CARP	Comité d'aménagement de la région parisienne
CCEPAN	Commission centrale d'étude pour le Plan d'aménagement national
CCI	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CCURP	Commissariat à la construction et à l'urbanisme pour la Région parisienne
CE	Conseil économique
CEARR	Comité d'étude et d'aménagement de Reims et de sa région
CEGOS	Commission générale d'organisation scientifique du travail
CELIB	Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts bretons
CERES	Centre de recherches économiques et sociales
CES	Conseil économique et social
CFDT	Confédération française démocratique du travail
CFT	Confédération française du travail
CFTC	Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens
CGP	Commissariat général du Plan
CGT	Confédération générale du travail
CHAN	Centre historique des Archives nationales
CHSP	Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po
CIAT	Comité interministériel d'aménagement du territoire.
CIOE	Comité interministériel d'orientation économique
CJP	Centre des jeunes patrons
CNARBRL	Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la region du Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc
CNAT	Commission nationale d'aménagement du territoire
CNER	Conseil national des économies régionales
CNOE	Conseil national d'orientation économique
CNPF	Conseil national du patronat français
CNU	Comité national d'urbanisme
CNU-SAT	Comité national d'urbanisme, section Aménagement du territoire
CODER	Commissions de développement économique régional
CRARS	Centre Républicain d'Action Rurale et Social
CREE	Commission régionale d'expansion économique (CELIB)

CSAOGRP	Comité supérieur de l'aménagement et de l'organisation générale de la région parisienne
CSC	Conseil supérieur de la Construction
CUDA	Comité européen des régions sous-développées
DADT	Direction de l'Aménagement du territoire (MRU/Ministry of Construction)
DATAR	Délégation à l'Aménagement du territoire et à l'Action régionale
DGCL	Direction générale des collectivités locales
DGEN	Délégation générale à l'équipement national
DIME	Direction des industries métallurgiques, mécaniques et électriques
DOMTOM	départements d'outre-mer et territoires d'outre-mer
DRP	District de la région parisienne
EEC	European Economic Community
ENA	Ecole nationale d'administration
ENFOM	École nationale de la France d'outre-mer
FDES	Fonds de développement économique et social
FGM	Fédération Générale de la Métallurgie (CFDT)
FIDES	Fonds d'investissement pour le développement économique et social d'outre-mer
FLN	Front de libération nationale (Algeria)
FLNC	Fronte di Liberazione Naziunale Corsu
FNAT	Fonds national d'aménagement du territoire
FNSEA	Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles
FNSP	Fondation nationale de Sciences Po
HLM	Habitations à loyer modéré
IDC	Industrial Development Certificates
IERSO	Institut d'économie régionale du Sud-Ouest
IFA	Centre d'archives de l'Institut français d'architecture, Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine
IGEN	Inspection générale de l'Économie nationale
IGF	Inspection Générale des Finances
INRA	Institut national de la recherche agronomique
INSEE	Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques
IPMF	Institut Pierre Mendès France
IRFED	Institut international de recherche et de formation en vue du développement harmonisé
J.O.	Journal officiel
JAC	Jeunesse agricole catholique
JOC	Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne
MEN	Ministère à l'économie nationale
MRP	Mouvement républicain populaire
MRU	Ministère de la reconstruction et de l'urbanisme
OCRS	Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes
OECE	Organisation Européenne de Coopération Economique
OREAM	Organisations d'Étude d'Aménagement des aires Métropolitaines
PADOG	Plan d'aménagement et d'organisation générale de la région parisienne

PAR	programme d’action régionale
PARP	Plan d'aménagement de la région parisienne
PCF	Parti communiste français
PSE	prime spéciale d’équipement
RMA	Rennes municipal archives
RNUR	Régie Nationale des Usines Renault
SAC	Service d'action civique
SACA	Société anonyme André Citroën
SAR	sociétés d’aménagement régional
SARP	Service d’aménagement de la région parisienne
SCP	Société du Canal de Provence
SDAURP	Schéma directeur d’aménagement et d’urbanisme de la région parisienne
SEM	Sociétés d’économies mixtes
SETCO	Société pour l'Equipement Touristique de la Corse
SISC	Syndicat indépendant des salariés de Citroën
SMIG	salaire minimum interprofessionnel garanti
SNCAC	Société nationale de constructions aéronautiques du Centre
SNCAM	Société nationale des constructions aéronautiques du Midi
SNCASO	Société nationale des constructions aéronautiques du Sud-ouest
SOMIVAC	Société d'aménagement pour la mise en valeur de la Corse
SPAR	secteur pilote d’aménagement rural
UDCA	Union de Défense des Commerçants et des Artisans
UIMM	Union des industries métallurgiques et minières

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INTRODUCTION

In 1945, Louis Chevalier complained about French industry's hostility to decentralized production, in the business magazine *Hommes et techniques.*[1] Chevalier would soon be known as the historian of the *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle*, but for now he was a member of the government's study commission on industrial location.[2] The decentralization of manufacturing had a long tradition in France. For generations, Chevalier wrote, "les industriels de la capitale ont cherché en province une main-d'œuvre nombreuse, moins chère que la main-d'œuvre parisienne et moins sensible aux fièvres sociales." But this trend had been increasingly occulted over the previous century. The unprecedented concentration of industry in the Paris region and the northeast manufacturing belt during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had led scholars, policymakers, and businessmen alike to assume that modern production was a metropolitan phenomenon. France had once been distinguished by the extent of its rural industrialization, but it now seemed to Chevalier as if "[l]'industrie décentralisée n'a jamais eu d'histoire."[3]

In fact, things had begun to change a decade earlier. The Paris region's fantastic growth and housing shortage in the first decades of the century, the historic strikes of 1936, and the threat of a second war with Germany had all put the decentralization of Parisian industry back on the table in political and business circles. A government order to relocate defense production achieved the first major factory transfers during the late 1930s. But these moves were haphazard and short-sighted efforts, which often proved industrial failures. Chevalier declared that it was time to transform decentralization from an issue dominated by anti-labor and defense concerns—which were "stériles, négatives

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[1] Louis Chevalier, "L'entreprise et la décentralisation industrielle," *Hommes et techniques* (January 1945).
[2] Louis Chevalier, *Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses à Paris pendant la première moitié du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Plon, 1958). In 1943, Chevalier joined Gabriel Dessus' industrial location studies in the Vichy planning service, Délégation générale à l'Équipement national (DGEN), which I discuss below. On the historian's particular mix of historical research and practical advising of planning agencies, see Paul-André Rosental and Isabelle Couzon, "Le Paris dangereux de Louis Chevalier: un projet d'histoire utile, Classes laborieuses et classes dangereuses (1958)," in *La Ville dans les sciences sociales*, ed. Christian Topalov and Bernard Lepetit (Paris: Belin, 2001).
[3] Chevalier, "L'entreprise et la décentralisation industrielle," 23.

et souvent anti-économiques"—into an issue of economic modernization and social renewal.[4] Just as importantly, the state needed to make factory relocation profitable. Most manufacturers who moved to the provinces encountered poor infrastructure, a dearth of trained workers, and little help from the government to navigate unknown territory.[5]

The situation Chevalier described in 1945 would be unrecognizable two decades later. In the intervening years—especially between 1954 and 1964—French authorities created an unprecedented series of programs to remap the Hexagon's industrial geography. The state limited manufacturing growth in the Paris region. National and local governments alike created new incentives to subsidize decentralization and specialized services to guide it. Industrializing the provinces legitimated vast state programs to redistribute public infrastructure and services, from highways to research labs and even elite *grandes écoles*. The need to coordinate these government efforts led to major state reforms, culminating in the "regionalization" of national planning and the state administration in 1964.[6] A decade earlier, reformers still lamented that French regional policy lagged behind other countries in Europe and even the U.S. Now they had what the British planner Peter Hall calls "a planning apparatus which is unparalleled, in its comprehensiveness and its sophistication, in the developed world."[7]

The conceptual foundation for this development effort was the notion of *aménagement du territoire*. According to this idiomatic term, geographic space should be the organizing framework for the growing government intervention in social, economic, and cultural affairs. Or as the government's 1962 plan immodestly put it: "intégrer dans un ensemble coordonné les interventions intéressant la totalité des activités économiques et humaines."[8] This totalizing ideal was realized in 1963 with the creation

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[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.: 24.
[6] Joseph Lajugie, Claude Lacour, and Pierre Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Dalloz, 1985), 167-223, 231-308.
[7] Peter Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 153.
[8] Cited in André Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone: Villages, villes, régions* (Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1964), 251. Much recent work has tried to piece together how a hodge-podge of specific interventions, in realms such as infrastructure and city planning, became fused into this holistic manipulation of national space. In very different veins, see for example Marc Desportes and Antoine Picon, *De l'Espace au territoire: L'aménagement en France (16e-20e siècles)* (Paris: Presses de l'ENPC, 1997); Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989); Olivier

of a dedicated government agency, the Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale (DATAR), which had the prerogative to intervene in the affairs of all state services and launched its own sprawling set of development programs.[9]

With such sweeping ambitions, *aménagement du territoire* is a hard notion to translate. The geographer Michael Keating gives a useful definition: "an integrated view of spatial development, incorporating economic development, land use planning and infrastructure provision."[10] The French economist Rémy Prud'homme offered a rather different explanation. The first thing to note, he told English speakers, is that in French the concept is "both vague and beautiful." The second thing is that, in practice, after 1963 it meant whatever the DATAR decided to do.[11] Henri Lefebvre, finally, saw *aménagement du territoire* as proof of the pervasive "spatialization" of government. Self-styled *aménageurs* believed that the ultimate stage of a modern state was one in which officials conscientiously designed space at all levels—from the national and even the international scales down to the local factory or neighborhood. The faith that territorial planning could perfect public regulation, further capitalist expansion, and create an ideal society thus became a veritable French mystique.[12] Indeed, in the

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Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours et d'un milieu aménageur des années trente aux années cinquante," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002).

[9] Bernard Pouyet, *La Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale* (Paris: Editions Cujas, 1968).

[10] Michael Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1998), 49.

[11] Rémy Prud'homme, "Regional Policy in France, 1962-1972," in *Public Policy and Regional Economic Development: The Experience of Nine Western Countries*, ed. Niles M. Hansen (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1974), 34.

[12] Henri Lefebvre went so far as to claim that with *urbanisme* and *aménagement du territoire*, French technocrats had gone the furthest in systematizing the deliberate production of space. In response, Lefebvre's "théorie unitaire de l'espace" would provide critical thinkers and actors the conceptual framework from which to launch competing projects. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), XVIII-XIX, XXI, 472. See also Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, "Introduction: State, Space, World: Lefebvre and the Survival of Capitalism," 20-26, and Lefebvre, "Reflections on the Politics of Space (1970)," 167-184, in Henri Lefebvre, Neil Brenner, and Stuart Elden, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009). On spatial planning as the ultimate stage of the state, see Olivier Guichard, *Aménager la France* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1965), 15. Rosemary Wakeman calls the DATAR the "supreme instrument for defining and ordering geographic space as a mechanism for national unity and state control," and argues that French political economy was unique in its attention to space. Rosemary Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 41, 115-116.

DATAR's publications, it sometimes bordered on mysticism.[13] I use the *aménagement du territoire* concept for a specific purpose: it helps explain why, at times, discussions about industrialization spilled over into a much broader debate on state responsibilities for economic development and social reform.

One important aspect of the concept was that it amalgamated the distinctive territorial inequalities which French regional policy was meant to solve. There were four main disparities. The first was Paris' domination of the provinces, a historically unique concentration of political, economic, and social power. The second was the split between city and countryside—a powerful divide in a nation that often vaunted its peasant roots and in which nearly half of the population remained rural on the eve of World War II. France's third geographic imbalance was between rural regions and industrialized ones. Until the geographic upheavals of the 1960s, this disparity still fit the "two Frances" framework identified by nineteenth-century statisticians: a more urban, industrial, and productive northeast and a more rural, poorer, and less dynamic center, south, and west.[14] Finally, regional policies were a response to local industrial crises and unemployment. Postwar France had low official unemployment, thanks to the astonishing job creation of the Trente Glorieuses, but it also shed millions of jobs in declining farms and factories. Since growth and contraction had different geographies, provincial men and women often migrated, clung to low-wage work, or lived in fear of local layoffs. As much as the broad vision of *aménagement du territoire*, it was this concrete problem of people and places stranded in the midst of postwar expansion that drove forward debates about how to balance the pursuit of growth and the correction of geographic inequalities.

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[13] "Il y a des relations secrètes entre l'espace et le temps, l'aménagement du territoire et l'évolution de la société," explained the second director of the DATAR, Jérôme Monod. He continued, somewhat eerily, "Aussi importants que les grandes opérations, et parfois plus, apparaissent les mécanismes secrets qui touchent au comportement des individus, à la conscience collective et aux processus de transformation ou d'adaptation de la société. L'aménagement du territoire a devant lui de nouveaux champs d'intervention." Jérôme Monod, *Transformation d'un pays, pour une géographie de la liberté* (Paris: Fayard, 1974), 148-149.

[14] Roger Brunet, *La France, un territoire à ménager* (Paris: Édition n°1, 1994), 109-182. In English, a good starting point is Hugh Clout, *The Geography of Postwar France: A Social and Economic Approach* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1972).

1. Thesis Outline: Imbalance and Equalization

Neil Brenner writes that territorial development is a "contradictory interplay of equalization and differentiation."[15] Postwar regional policies offer a perfect illustration of this fact. They represented an unprecedented effort at national redistribution, but politicians and planners claimed that in order to correct certain kinds of inequalities it was necessary to accept and promote others. Industrial decentralization was a Keynesian social policy—bringing new jobs to impoverished areas—but it also undercut the power of Parisian labor and created a kaleidoscope of new regional disparities. In terms of public investments, meanwhile, the ideal of homogenizing infrastructures, services, and amenities among France's regions was never so present as in the 1950s and 1960s, yet these same years brought the reclaiming of urban centers for social elites and extraordinary attempts to concentrate development on France's most competitive metropolitan areas. Discriminatory measures were often part of equalizing programs, not just a sign of their limits.

What follows is an attempt to put this interplay of equalization and differentiation into historical motion. It turns around a main argument. In the 1930s and 1940s, a small group of French experts invented a conservative decentralization doctrine that was remarkably focused on urban containment and rural preservation. Yet the actual creation of a strong regional policy only occurred in the mid-1950s, when a broader range of actors became interested in regional redistribution as a Keynesian policy. These groups used industrial decentralization for a series of more progressive projects: fighting unemployment, eradicating the low-wage economy that survived across much of provincial France, and aiding communities undergoing rapid decline. The shift in political outlooks was unmistakable; so was the survival of conservative projects, however. The 1930s goals of undermining Parisian labor, dressing up low wages in the ideal of a "peasant" France, and recreating a provincial bourgeoisie—which had long been eroded by the capital's attraction on French elites—remained as relevant as ever at the height of postwar industrialization.

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[15] Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 13 and more broadly 12-17. See also Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso Books, 1989), 107-109.

A number of recent studies show that postwar policies had their roots in the 1930s and 1940s.[16] The early initiatives proved just how reactionary industrial decentralization could be. Perhaps more than in any other country, French regional policy emerged as a conservative reaction against large industrial centers, especially Paris. The new cadre of Paris region planners that emerged in the 1920s was astonishingly explicit about the fact that relocating factories was an attack on the capital's radicalized proletariat—and not just a matter of redeveloping the City of Light for more elite social and economic functions. The risk of aerial bombardments, meanwhile, legitimated programs to displace factories and their workers from the urban landscape.

The provinces mainly shined by their absence from this early push for a national decentralization policy. When central administrators did consider the regions, it was either to dream about garden cities as a response to worker radicalism—a costly utopia that went largely unrealized—or to praise the low-wage lifestyles of rural France. Roland Ziegel, a government expert who worked on the decentralization of defense production, made this point clearly in a 1935 conference: "Le fondement économique de l'industrie disséminée réside, je l'ai dit déjà, dans le bas prix de la vie à la campagne."[17] Such backward ideals led government experts to condemn the most progressive story of these years: the lobbying of provincial workers and local growth coalitions to turn the buildup of war production into a force for rapid development and for spreading Popular Front gains to rural regions.[18]

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[16] Remi Baudouï, "L'aménagement du territoire en France, antécédents et genèse, 1911-1963," in *L' Aménagement du territoire, 1958-1974*, ed. François Caron, ed. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); Isabelle Couzon, "Les géographes français et la définition de l'aménagement du territoire des années 1950 aux années 1960," in *Villes, espaces et territoires - Travaux de l'EHESS* (Paris: EHESS, 1999); Isabelle Couzon, "La place de la ville dans le discours des aménageurs du début des années 1920 à la fin des années 1960," *Cybergeo* (1997); Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours;" Efi Markou, "La décentralisation des industries parisiennes. Figures d'acteurs (1928-1940)," in *La ville sans bornes, la ville et ses bornes*, ed. Danièle Fraboulet and Dominique Rivière (Paris Nolin, 2006); Efi Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," in *Tissu industriel, planification spatiale des activités économiques et rapports sociopolitiques dans la métropole parisienne (1920-1950)*, ed. Efi Markou, Danièle Fraboulet, and Catherine Rhein (Paris: Ministère de l'Équipement, 2005); Danièle Voldman, "Reconstructions d'après-guerres et aménagement du territoire," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002).

[17] Ziegel, "Dissémination de l'industrie française," 1944, CAC 19770777/2;Roland Ziegel, "Une tâche nationale: la dissémination de l'industrie française," *Bulletin du Centre polytechnicien d'études économiques* (January-February, 1935): 27.

[18] Herrick Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism in the French Aircraft Industry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City*.

The Vichy regime took the reactionary strand of French decentralization to its zenith, giving free rein to ideals of breaking Paris' working class and recreating a society of peasants and townsfolk. It was in this context that a team of government experts, led by the businessman Gabriel Dessus, undertook unprecedented studies on industrial location. Their findings and policy doctrine provided the foundation for postwar programs, in part because so many men survived two regime changes, tracing important continuities between the 1930s and 1960s. Vichy was a place where ruralist authoritarianism, pragmatic economic studies, and proto-Keynesian ideas on state-led industrialization mixed freely.[19] The more forward-looking wing of the 1940s initiatives was conservative by any later standard. Its conservative branch was downright reactionary.

In recent years, Jean-François Gravier has come to personify the continuities between right-wing radicalism and postwar regional development. A leading figure of the corporatist "Young Right" (*Jeune droite*) movement in the 1930s, Gravier simultaneously emerged as an expert on economic regionalism and a quasi-fascist proponent of the National Revolution under Vichy.[20] His decentralization ideal reflected this radical turn. An authoritarian state would force the urban proletariat back into peasant communities and suffocate Paris, which Gravier saw as a monstrosity that "dévore les hommes et les richesses de la France."[21] What makes Gravier's history most troubling is not just that he became one of the most influential experts and public spokesmen for regional development after the Liberation, but also that so much of his wartime thinking carried over into his postwar texts. In his classic 1947 work, *Paris et le désert français*, Gravier demanded the authoritarian displacement of Parisian workers, the maintenance of France's existing agricultural population, and the "colonization" of the Hexagon's least dynamic regions by elite outsiders installed with state power.[22]

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[19] Philip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 21, 23, 369, 372.
[20] On Gravier, see Olivier Dard, "Jean-François Gravier: un aménageur dans le siècle," in *Aménageurs, territoires et entreprises en Europe du Nord-Ouest au second XXe siècle*, ed. Olivier Dard and Jean-François Eck (Metz: Centre régional universitaire lorrain d'histoire, 2010); Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours," 69-75. From a more polemical perspective, see Bernard Marchand, *Les Ennemis de Paris: La haine de la grande ville, des lumières à nos jours* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009), 174-192.
[21] Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947), 192-193.
[22] Ibid.

The problem for historians is connecting the initiatives of the 1930s and 1940s with the concrete policy realizations of the 1950s and 1960s. During the first years after the war, government experts drew on the Vichy work to craft a number of foundational planning documents; the new Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism (MRU) tried to translate the new notion of *aménagement du territoire* into action.[23] Yet these efforts had little practical impact. The MRU's proposals found a weak echo among businesses, government administrators, and politicians. The ministry failed to gain approval for most of its policy proposals or convince manufacturers that provincial production could be a profitable endeavor. Postwar reconstruction thwarted ideals of regional redistribution by concentrating investments on the nation's existing industrial centers.[24] New support for *aménagement du territoire* emerged over the following handful of years, but at that point a shifting economic and political context profoundly altered the frameworks proposed by early planners. For all their ambitious development proposals, Gravier and the early MRU remained attached to two conservative ideals inherited from the Vichy years: shrinking the Paris region's industry and defending the social order of provincial France. This stance antagonized Parisian workers, industrialists, and politicians alike. It also clashed with the priority of rapidly reestablishing growth, imposed by the powerful bureaucrats in the Finance Ministry and the Commissariat général du Plan.[25]

In the early 1950s, however, things changed rapidly. The French economy entered a new phase of extreme uneven development. Regional imbalance had been dulled and scrambled for the two previous decades by the Depression, the upheaval of World War II, and the inflated demand of the reconstruction years, which kept unproductive firms afloat. By contrast, the recession that followed the Korean War in 1952-1955 sent many provincial industries, like textiles and coal, into a rapid decline

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[23] On Dautry, see Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours," 73-74. Two recent texts that bridge the gap to the early 1950s are Danièle Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises de 1940 à 1954: Histoire d'une politique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), 393-418; Benoît Pouvreau, "La politique d'aménagement du territoire d'Eugène Claudius-Petit," *Vingtième Siècle Revue d'Histoire* 79 (2003). For longer-term overviews, see Marcel Roncayolo, "L'aménagement du territoire (18ème-20ème siècles)," in *Histoire de la France, tome 1: L'espace français*, ed. André Burguière and Jacques Revel (Paris: Seuil, 1989); Desportes and Picon, *De l'Espace au territoire*.

[24] Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 415-416; Pouvreau, "La politique d'aménagement du territoire d'Eugène Claudius-Petit," 51.

[25] Michel Margairaz, *L'État, les finances et l'économie: Histoire d'une conversion, 1932-1952* (Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 1991), 1289.

from which they would never recover. A much broader problem of provincial under-employment became clear during these same years, as the rural exodus accelerated and government authorities began planning for the arrival of millions of baby boomers and women in the labor force. The job offer thus lagged behind employment needs in much of the provinces. By contrast, France's northeast industrial heartland and especially the Paris region boasted fantastic growth rates, a labor shortage, and an influx of blue-collar migrants.[26]

This renewed geographic imbalance was the keystone of decentralization—as both a public policy and an industrial strategy—for nearly two decades.[27] Regional redistribution remained a costly and contentious proposition, but it now had the potential to please a wider range of constituencies.[28] Modernizing economic bureaucrats, the Finance officials who held the purse-strings on state subsidies, and labor unions and the Left now saw the interest of regional development as a Keynesian economic policy. In struggling provinces, new industrialization could stomp out unemployment, obtain local cooperation for modernization programs that led to layoffs, and eliminate unproductive farms and factories that survived on low wages. The same concern with reversing local decline and creating local jobs spurred the most stunning political shift of the 1950s: the proliferation of provincial "expansion committees." These progrowth coalitions were intent on challenging the most conservative local forces and lobbying the administration for development aid.[29]

Decentralization was not just a welfarist redistribution to poor provinces. A growing number of public officials believed that it was just as necessary for national corporations and the Paris region. Steering manufacturing growth out to the provinces'

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[26] My account is based on the detailed tracking of the evolution of the French labor market in the 1950s-60s based on INSEE data in Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français: Le cas de la région de Caen, 1950-1980" (doctoral thesis, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, 1982), 24-47. On the early 1950s tensions, see also Hubert Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République* (Paris: Économica, 1987), 275-277. For a longer period, see Félix Damette and Jaques Scheibling, *Le Territoire français: Permanences et mutations* (Paris: Hachette, 2003), 181-201.

[27] Pierre Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires: L'économie d'archipel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005 [1996]), 29-34.

[28] My analysis of the French case here draws on Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe*, 47; Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 143; Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 234-237.

[29] Romain Pasquier, "La régionalisation française revisitée. Fédéralisme, mouvement régional et élites modernisatrices (1950-1964)," *Revue française de science politique* 53 (2003).

labor reserve could alleviate pressure on the capital's job market, which drove up wages and limited production. Many officials also saw mobilizing France's own peasant labor as a preferable alternative to the only other solution: accelerating foreign immigration. As immediate postwar shortages passed and manufacturers outgrew their Paris region sites, moreover, building new factories was a necessity in any case. Decentralization policy justified government subsidies for this corporate expansion, as business representatives and the Ministry of Industry clearly recognized. Finally, building new sites was often a precondition for industrialists to change work processes. Starting from scratch in the provinces allowed an employer to standardize production, reduce the number of skilled tasks, and downgrade pay scales and workers' power—three changes resisted by Parisian labor.

Alongside manufacturers, other Parisian interests were either more receptive or less hostile to decentralization policy by the mid-1950s. Blocking industrial construction could slow the alarming migration into the region, alleviating the capital's unprecedented housing crisis. Moving factories out of Paris was just as necessary for its redevelopment as a world-class city—a project that had been kept on hold since the 1930s but was ready to proceed after 1955. The elite subtext of urban redevelopment was clear: factories and workers had less business being in Paris than "higher" industrial, service, and administrative functions.[30] For Paris' industrial suburbs, however, record growth rates in manufacturing jobs made decentralization less of a threat to workers, mayors, and especially manufacturers, who needed land and labor more than ever. Even the Communist-linked trade union Confédération générale du travail (CGT), which had long denounced decentralization as an attack on Parisian labor, could now demand its reinforcement as part of a provincial development policy.[31] In practice, decentralization remained controversial. But between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s as never before or since, a range of political and business groups could see the interest of relocating investments.

This turnabout led to the breakthrough of *aménagement du territoire*. An ambitious set of policies passed in 1954-1955 provided the institutional and discursive

[30] Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 289-340. See my discussion of Paris below.
[31] M. Le Brun in *J.O. Conseil économique*, séance of 4 August 1954, 474, 487-488.

bases for two decades of redistributive regional policies. The Finance minister, Pierre Pflimlin, proclaimed that uneven development had become one of the nation's top economic problems and that solving it would be "l'objectif essentiel de notre politique économique."[32] The 1955 legislation contained a series of core principles. First, geographic disparities were provoking a crisis of national unity. The residents of developed regions fully benefited from the postwar rise in revenues and consumer opportunities. The residents of underdeveloped regions, on the other hand, were trapped in poor working conditions and felt threatened by economic change, European integration, and trade liberalization. Second, redistributing industrial and urban growth was in the nation's best economic interest. It would help achieve a Keynesian spiral of full employment, faster growth, higher wages, and increased consumer demand; by offering people and communities security in the midst of tremendous restructuring, it would break down resistance to modernization. Finally, this whole program rested on the principle that all French regions could be integrated into the expansion and social dynamism of Europe's economic heartland.

Pflimlin personified the new alliance of modernizers in Paris and in the provinces. He simultaneously founded an expansion committee in his Strasbourg political fief, presided over the new national congress of provincial boosters, and displaced the locus of regional policy from the MRU to the centers of economic policy: the Finance Ministry, the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP), and the Ministry of Industry.[33] Nobody admired the totalizing ideal of *aménagement du territoire* more than Pflimlin. In a June 1955 decree, he therefore expanded earlier policy measures into a vast program of comprehensive regional development. The administration would reserve its most generous industrial subsidies for areas marked by unemployment or rural poverty; the state provision of decent jobs to struggling communities was now part of the postwar social compromise. The 1955 decree also launched a host of regional development institutions. The most ambitious were new planning regions and comprehensive development programs, both of which would be integrated into France's national plan.

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[32] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 18 March 1955, 1682-1683.
[33] Pierre Pflimlin and Daniel Riot, *Entretiens avec Pierre Pflimlin: Itinéraires d'un Européen* (Strasbourg: Nuée bleue, 1989).

All in all, Pflimlin's initiative was a veritable "charte de la politique régionale": a practically boundless vision of the state's responsibility for provincial modernization.[34]

The turnabout between the 1930s and the 1950s was unmistakable. Early efforts had been "stériles, négatives et souvent anti-économiques," as Louis Chevalier wrote in 1945, but they now fit a framework of Keynesian modernization. Vicious attacks on urban labor had given way to a new discourse of workers' right to well-paying jobs close to home. And policies initially designed by a small group of government experts now interested unions, manufacturers, and an unprecedented political lobby for provincial development. In many respects, then, the emergence of *aménagement du territoire* follows the narrative established by historical research on other aspects of state economic intervention in the Hexagon. Between the first decades of the twentieth century and the mid-1950s, conservative projects of preserving the social and political order of small-town France gave way to a more determined state promotion of rapid industrialization, urban growth, and the eradication of protectionist politics. This is a story of Malthusianism to modernization—perhaps even the emergence of a French "New Deal."[35]

Yet the regional problem provides a key twist to these nationally focused narratives. Even at the height of modernizing state interventions, *aménagement du territoire* remained as much about perpetuating regional and local differences as about eradicating the old peasant France and homogenizing the national territory. National corporations relied for their growth on the exploitation of geographic disparities in workers' wages, consumption, class sentiments, and desperation for jobs. They were no less eager to exploit provincial governments' bidding for investments in response to local decline. Public officials in charge of regional development likewise mobilized uneven development to fuel industrial modernization, entice manufacturers to move out of Paris,

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[34] The quote is Michel Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne* (St. Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1970), 29.

[35] In the now classic analysis of Richard Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France: Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). See also Margairaz, *État, les finances et l'économie*; Peter A. Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1986); Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era*, 154, 166; Bernard Ganne, "Les PME dans le système français: heurts et malheur des modes de gouvernance," in *Les PME en Europe*, ed. Arnaldo Bagnasco and Charles F. Sabel (Paris: La Découverte, 1994).

and limit the public cost of France's spectacular urbanization. The real New Dealers staged an open attack on conservative southern Democrats and sought to eradicate the South's low-wage competition to northern labor.[36] In France, on the other hand, many central planners fought regional wage equalization, used decentralization to deflate salaries in Paris, and chased workers out of the capital. The politically pragmatic modernizers of the Fourth Republic, such as Edgar Faure, tiptoed around low-wage business interests.[37] When the Fifth Republic established a strong executive determined to accelerate economic and political change, it was in the more business-oriented form of the Gaullist regime.[38]

Once again, Pierre Pflimlin personified the tensions at work in France's shifting political economy. Even as Pflimlin unveiled his sweeping regional policy to the National Assembly, his expansion committee for the Bas-Rhin was vaunting Alsace's cheap peasant labor to Parisian manufacturers. "La main-d'œuvre de cette région est une main-d'œuvre semi-rurale," it boasted, "une partie de la famille travaillant sur de petites exploitations agricoles et l'autre partie allant à l'usine. Il y a donc là la certitude d'une main-d'œuvre stable." Pflimlin may have demanded an end to the second-class citizenship of underdeveloped regions, but for decentralization the dire poverty of rural France was an asset. It ensured employers "une population sérieuse et laborieuse, aimant l'ordre, ayant le sens de la discipline et le goût du travail bien fait."[39] In short, a region of peasants was exactly what Pflimlin needed to introduce standardized assembly lines in French industry while developing the Bas-Rhin.

By the 1950s, then, geographic disparities were both a source of economic growth and an object of political contestation. As such, regional policies were the focus of constant battles.[40] I trace these debates in three basic movements. Chapters one, two,

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[36] Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 23, 39, 60-68, 85-87.
[37] Philip M. Williams, *Crisis and Compromise: Politics in the Fourth Republic* (London: Longmans, 1964 [1958]), 487-488, 492; Éric Roussel, *Pierre Mendès France* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 364.
[38] Félix Damette, *Le Territoire français, son aménagement* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1969); Delphine Dulong, *Moderniser la politique, aux origines de la Ve République* (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1998).
[39] Préfecture du Bas-Rhin, "Possibilités d'implantation d'industries nouvelles dans le département du Bas-Rhin," CAC 19780695/8.
[40] On inequality as a source of growth, see Philippe Aydalot, *Dynamique spatiale et développement inégal* (Paris: Economica, 1980 [1976]), 24, 334; Michael Storper and Richard Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative: Territory, Technology, and Industrial Growth* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1989).

and three examine the changes and continuities between the initial efforts of the 1930s and the policy breakthroughs of the 1950s. Chapter one discusses interwar decentralization ideals, the relocation of aircraft production in the 1930s, and Vichy's wartime studies. These early experiences revealed the extreme gap between Paris and the provinces' attractiveness for manufacturers and workers alike. Such disparities dimmed hopes for rapid decentralization, creating two main dilemmas that carry over into the next pair of chapters.

First, planners debated strategies for containing Paris' growth. Some demanded authoritarian measures to rapidly push factories and workers out of the capital. Others promoted a more gradual, but far less contentious program of convincing manufacturers to disinvest from their Parisian sites over the course of a generation. Chapter two traces these twin strategies for urban containment during the fifteen years after the Liberation. Programs for rapidly shrinking urban industry failed in no uncertain terms. The MRU's planners failed to transfer factories—despite some extraordinary efforts, as shown by the case of the Renault car factories in Billancourt—and the Paris region's blue-collar workforce soon soared to historic heights. But they had more success in their second strategy, preparing the way for gradual disinvestment; ironically, this project was itself furthered by Paris' fantastic growth, which finally legitimated a strong decentralization policy and sent manufactures searching for provincial production sites. The early postwar decades thus played a highly ambiguous role in the growth and decline of working-class Paris.

The second dilemma highlighted by the wartime studies concerned provincial development. The poverty of rural regions' wages, workforce skills, and infrastructure elicited two responses from French leaders interested in regional development. On the one hand, this dilapidation inspired the sweeping ambitions of *aménagement du territoire*: a vast program to make France's regions better places to live and work. In the short term, on the other hand, most areas' only attraction for Parisian manufacturers was their abundance of cheap labor for Taylorized assembly lines. Many government authorities decided this was a good reason to actively limit equalizing tendencies in terms of workers' wages, consumption, and job opportunities. Chapter three examines these profoundly contradictory calls for social uplift and continued disparities through the mid-

1950s. I focus on two key issues: the regional wage gap and control over labor markets. On both scores, the postwar years showed that new state regulation could be used for diametrically opposing projects. France's new minimum wage gave rise to a fight between proponents of national equalization and defenders of cheap provincial labor. Geographically targeted job creation, meanwhile, had a contradictory significance for French workers: it delivered work to people in need, but by steering jobs to provincial labor surpluses it doused workers' power and pay.

Chapters four and five discuss the increasingly strident sense of regional crisis and the calls for a sweeping development policy that took shape between 1954 and 1964. Chapter four opens with the main development principles enshrined in the 1955 legislation. I then analyze three ideas that shaped the sense of regional crisis. First, the nineteenth-century notion of the "two Frances" was suddenly revived by new statistical data and by the Poujade revolt of small proprietors threatened by change. Second, French policymakers imported the new concept of development from colonial empires and from the international institutions charged with aiding poor countries. Development thinking reinforced the Manichean strand in French debates: poor provinces could either modernize, joining Europe's industrial core, or be forever left behind in a rapidly changing world. Finally, proponents of *aménagement du territoire* set out to impose a modern mindset on traditional populations. Without this psychological transformation, they argued, development programs would fail and the Hexagon would remain a dual society, split between forward-looking *forces vives* and immobile Frenchmen clinging to the past.

Chapter five argues that France's postwar investment in empire and decolonization profoundly shaped the debate over territorial inequalities among metropolitan regions. French observers had long made comparisons between the provinces and the colonies, but two things were different in the 1950s and 1960s: the sheer extent of colonial metaphors in public debate and the degree to which they were rooted in actual imperial experiences. As hundreds of thousands of government officials, social scientists, and ordinary citizens traveled overseas and millions more watched the saga of "Greater France" from home, empire became a framework for analyzing the nation as never before. Different groups drew divergent lessons from colonial

precedents. Provincial growth coalitions demanded the exceptional development investments accorded to imperial possessions; leading bureaucrats and administration officials hoped to bring home the *dirigisme* they had invented overseas; and opposition regionalists used the colonial metaphor to denounce this very brand of top-down modernization programs.

Chapters six and seven provide a case study of new provincial industrialization: the vast Citroën car factories in Rennes, Brittany. Citroën's move to the rural West in 1951 was a key early victory for national planners and Brittany's new boosters. Its shows how rapidly central policies, local entrepreneurialism, and corporate assumptions about provincial production changed as decentralization shifted from a minority ideal to a mass movement. Above all, the Rennes auto plants fulfilled the regional planning ideals hatched under Vichy: corporate and public officials teamed up to conscientiously preserve the social order of a peasant France during the industrialization of the Trente Glorieuses. Citroën exclusively recruited among the Rennes region's desperately poor farm population and strived to keep its new workers out of the city, creating a social formation that hovered between traditional rural subsistence and American suburbia. With "peasant-workers" operating one of Europe's most modern factories, Citroën-Rennes underscored the existence of profound continuities in the midst of the rapid postwar changes.

The Rennes case also shows how sanguinely public authorities packaged cheap and docile labor for outside investors. Eager to prove their product, officials pushed peasants off the land, orchestrated the job market in Citroën's favor, and stood by silently as the automaker ferociously repressed unionization efforts. By its sheer excesses, however, this authoritarian, low-wage model of labor relations provoked strident conflicts in the Rennes community. These debates are the object of chapter seven. By the early 1960s, the city's stakeholders—from labor and business organizations to the municipal council and even church leaders—were disputing the merits of the development model invented just a decade before: the courting of Parisian manufacturers with the promise of exploitable workers. Initially considered the savior of Brittany's economy, Citroën prefigured the frustrations with decentralized industry that would soon erupt on the national stage during May 1968.

In the conclusion, I step back to a national perspective, tracing new industrial trends through the eve of the 1974 oil crisis. I argue that 1968 was a symbolic turning point in more ways than one. The national census revealed, to general surprise, that a series of century-old territorial trends had begun to reverse, challenging many of the assumptions that underpinned *aménagement du territoire*. At the same time, new conflicts underscored the successes and limits of the main trends traced in this thesis: the shrinking of Parisian manufacturing, provincial industrialization, and the spatial Keynesian principle that the state could develop poor regions without harming national growth and competitiveness. Both economically and politically, the trends which would destabilize regional policy in the 1970s and 1980s began before the economic crisis.

2. The Industrial Integration of the Hexagon: a Historiographical Essay

In addition to connecting the conservative origins of *aménagement du territoire* with its postwar realizations, my research attempts to establish a national framework for analyzing territorial change. Much of the best French history on this topic takes a vertical lens: we watch the interaction between complex local societies, urban and regional institutions, and the central state and national companies. Yet many aspects of postwar development can best be understood as a relationship *between* cities and regions *mediated* by the state and corporations. The following historiographical essay examines two social science frameworks that provide such an integrated analysis—the "spatial divisions of labor" in postwar industry and territorial governance—before returning to the current historical research on postwar France.

During the 1970s, there emerged a dominant framework for analyzing the restructuring of regional inequalities in work, wages, and urban development in France: postwar industrialization had created a new spatial division of labor.[41] Until the 1950s, regional disparities and complementarities were largely based on differences by

[41] Classic early theorizations were Aydalot, *Dynamique spatiale*; Alain Lipietz, *Le Capital et son espace* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1977); Michel Freyssenet, *Division du travail et mobilisation quotidienne de la main-d'œuvre: Les cas Renault et Fiat* (Paris: Centre de Sociologie Urbaine, 1979). For overviews of the French literature on the matter, see Yannick Lung, "Modèles industriels et géographie de la production," in *Économie industrielle, économie spatiale*, ed. Alain Rallet and André Torre (Paris: Economica, 1995), 94-96; Georges Benko, *La Science régionale* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1998), 56-63, 73-79. Key English-language analyses are Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*; Storper and Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative*. On international similarities, see Philippe Aydalot, *Économie régionale et urbaine* (Paris: Economica, 1985), 80-91.

economic sectors and worker productivity. Large peripheral regions remained dominated by agriculture; slow-growth manufactures such as textiles and shoe-making survived as local industries; and high-growth sectors like cars and electronics were heavily concentrated in a few core industrial centers, first and foremost the Paris region. This industrial geography changed dramatically between the mid-1950s and the early 1970s. Traditional provincial sectors retracted; they were replaced by the thousands of modern assembly lines created by expanding Parisian corporations. As farmers' children and laid-off textiles workers entered new car and electronics factories, the regional gap in industrialization rates, productivity, and to some extent wages narrowed. At the same time, however, new inequalities emerged in terms of skills, job opportunities, and professional power. New branch plants inordinately specialized in low-paid assembly work. Engineering and skilled production, meanwhile, were more rarely decentralized, mainly to cities with a trained industrial workforce. Headquarters, commercial functions, and research and product development were more concentrated than ever in the Paris region. A new division of labor, based on the Fordist corporation operating multiple production sites, was thus superimposed upon old regional inequalities.[42]

This geographic segmentation of production occurred in much of Europe and North America, but the northern half of France—which received the bulk of Paris' overspill manufacturing growth—presented one of its most extreme examples, for several reasons. First of all, there was a historical convergence of Taylorization, workforce restructuring, and decentralization policy in the 1950s and 1960s. On the whole, French manufacturers were relatively late in standardizing production. When they did so *en masse* after World War II, millions of untrained provincials were entering the job market. The fact that most French regions had so little skilled labor gave manufacturers both the need and the opportunity to deskill factory work. Government officials, meanwhile, were determined to push those Taylorized plants out to the provinces, to avoid having new job-seekers flood into Paris. Finally, France's urban network further encouraged a branch-plant model. Since Paris already concentrated command functions to an inordinate degree, few provincial cities could rival its appeal for elite tasks. And the capital's

[42] Damette and Scheibling, *Le Territoire français*, 89-102, 211-215; Jean Bastié and Christian Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation industrielle en France (1954-1984)," *Cahiers du CREPIF* 7 (September, 1984): 178-182; Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 23-36.

central location, mixed with the Hexagon's small size, meant that corporations rarely needed to create regional headquarters or autonomous factory directions.

Each of these points had counterexamples abroad. Britain's problem areas, for instance, had much more skilled labor; in Italy, state officials long remained more sanguine than French planners about letting rural southerners migrate to the industrial centers of the North; and Germany's more decentralized urban system was a foil to Paris' extreme domination of the provinces. The result of these French particularities was what Pierre Veltz evocatively terms the "Taylorization of territory."[43] Postwar development further sharpened the top-down nature of France's industrial and urban hierarchy. By the end of the Trente Glorieuses, statistics on workers' skills, corporate command functions, and "peri-productive" urban assets demarcated more clearly than ever before the pyramid of Paris, regional capitals, smaller towns, and rural areas.[44]

Branch-plant industrialization had a contradictory relationship to the notion of the postwar years as a period of Fordist-Keynesian capitalism.[45] Decentralization did as much to spread as to undermine the elements of Fordist wage labor: increases in pay and mass consumption, national collective bargaining, and job stability. On the one hand, the geographic expansion of Parisian industry had the potential to spread Fordist gains to new regions. Decentralized manufacturing jobs generally provided residents with better pay and job stability than declining farms and factories. National corporations, unions, and labor laws gave provincial workers a platform for demanding an equalization of pay scales and workplace opportunities with their colleagues in the Paris region. On the other hand, manufacturers often saw the decentralization of production as a way to escape the wage gains and strong unions in the French capital.[46] New plants were an opportunity to standardize production, allowing employers to cut pay scales, reduce opportunities for

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[43] In the evocative expression of Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 26.
[44] Damette and Scheibling, *Le Territoire français*, 89-102, 211-215; Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 23-36.
[45] Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 128. For a French regulation school take on France's particular national brand of Fordism—with its relative lateness, centrality of state-led modernization, and imbalanced nature, due to the long survival of low-wage social strata—see Alain Lipietz, "Governing the Economy in the Face of International Challenge: From National Developmentalism to National Crisis," in *Searching for the New France*, ed. James Hollifield and George Ross (New York: Routledge, 1991). For a historian's account of postwar Fordist gains, see Denis Woronoff, *Histoire de l'industrie en France du XVIe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1998 [1994]), 547-551.
[46] Lung, "Modèles industriels," 94-95.

promotion, and implement factory reforms that workers in the Paris region resisted.[47] By 1960, finally, runaway factories subsidized by state grants were directly eliminating ten thousand jobs per year in the capital, fueling a deindustrialization process that would subvert France's main center of labor power over the three following decades.[48]

Making the provinces' cheaper development model work often required preserving the broader social order of rural France, with its anemic consumption, dispersed housing, and traditional authority structure. The main French theorists of the spatial division of labor idea, Philippe Aydalot and Alain Lipietz, emphasized the extent of corporate and state efforts to manage the articulation of urban Fordism and peasant structures. Aydalot considered the reduced costs of social reproduction in rural areas and small towns even more important in shaping geographic wage differentials than the power relations between labor and management. The importance of cheap rural living in the new development model, however, clashed with the growing consumer expectations and rapid urbanization of French society. This core tension shaped much of the practical work of planners, politicians, and manufacturers. They needed to bring enough jobs and benefits to stem the rural exodus while maintaining rural consumption models, keeping workers out of the city, and avoiding the influx of job opportunities that could create labor competition and wage hikes.[49] Planning regional change often meant steering a "knife-edge path between preservation and destruction," as Edward Soja puts it in his summary of Lipietz's work.[50]

The spatial division of labor concept can have a functionalist and ahistorical aspect to it. The historian Jean-Louis Loubet shows in his comparison of France's big four automakers that, "en fait, il n'y a pas une réelle identité de pensée et d'action sur la façon de mener une opération de décentralisation." The car companies differed on nearly all the particulars: their relationship to the state, their concern for geographic proximity

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[47] Aydalot, *Économie régionale et urbaine*, 87; Michel Freyssenet, *La division capitaliste du travail* (Savelli, 1977), 93-94, 112-122.
[48] Jean Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," *Notes et études documentaires* (May, 1970): 82.
[49] Aydalot, *Dynamique spatiale*, 318-329, 333; Andrée Matteaccioli, *Philippe Aydalot, pionnier de l'économie territoriale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004), 110-132, 348-354; Lung, "Modèles industriels," 95.
[50] Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, 108. Here Soja is transposing David Harvey's notion of a "knife-edge path" between preservation and destruction from the urban landscape to the question of regional economies. See David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 247-248.

between production sites, their choice between rural and urban locations, and the differentials in wages and union presence across their different sites. Corporate strategies changed over time as well, in function of the application of government policies, the apparent successes and failures of operations, and production imperatives.[51] Loubet's insight holds more broadly. The best new work in industrial and social history shows the diversity of outcomes in decentralized factories.[52] All the same, social scientists working in the spatial division of labor paradigm injected a good deal of diversity and contingency into the model, and their analyses remain central for many aspects of postwar restructuring: corporate location decisions, the politics of wages and labor markets, and new residential and consumption patterns among industrial workers.[53]

One reason to retain the division of labor paradigm is that postwar officials themselves adopted its main tenets. During the 1940s studies, I argue, government experts concluded that a common thread of profitable decentralization—above and beyond sector and firm differences—was precisely corporations' need to standardize new branch plants, target pools of cheap unskilled labor, and leave specialist workers and managers behind in Paris. In other words, the Fordist division of labor was a generalizeable model that could be circulated in business circles through conferences, booklets, and meetings with Parisian manufacturers required to relocate production. It also provided a rule of thumb for planners themselves, as they decided which factories to move out of the Paris region and how to attract investments to provincial towns.

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[51] Jean-Louis Loubet, *Citroën, Peugeot, Renault et les autres: Soixante ans de stratégies* (Paris: ETAI, 1995), 71-82.

[52] See for instance Vincent Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons: Conflits d'usines, conflits identitaires en Bretagne dans les années 68* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008); Xavier Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière dans les années 68: Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007); Jean-Claude Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975)," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002). Doreen Massey shows that for British regional policy, the interests at stake differed a great among specific cases—in function of the mobilization of labor groups, political alliances in Paris and the provinces, and corporate strategies. Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*, 234-243, 305, 316.

[53] On the need for contingency, see Storper and Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative*, 31; Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*. For French examples, see Nicole Eizner and Bernard Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979); Jacques Malézieux, "Le bassin de main-d'œuvre des grandes unités de production industrielle. Évolution récente," *Bulletin de l'Association de Géographie Française* (1981); Philippe Aydalot, "Politique de localisation des entreprises et marché du travail," *Revue d'économie régionale et urbaine* (1981); Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne;" Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation."

This insight suggests a different critique of the spatial division of labor tradition: it underestimates the role of public authorities in shaping new business logics.[54] The critical social scientists of the 1970s often concluded that government intervention simply accompanied more fundamental drivers of industrial decentralization, namely technological change and corporate restructuring.[55] Yet the most visible state actions—forcing manufacturers to leave the capital and using subsidies to steer them to priority zones—were just the tip of the iceberg of decentralization policy. National and local officials rolled out a vast array of public investments to make rural provinces attractive places to produce. Just as importantly, they set out on a generation-long quest to change industrial prejudices and practices. Rural regions—long considered "des cimetières d'usines," as Chevalier put it in 1945—earned a new reputation as business-friendly communities whose populations were ready to enter the factory.[56] A whole field of state and local officials rapidly imposed themselves as indispensable interlocutors for manufacturers relocating investments; they educated executives about how to decentralize profitably and provided them with the practical guidance necessary to move a factory and fill it with the correct number of desirable workers. This systemic change in government intervention and business logics was as important as any negotiation over a specific factory program.[57]

An equally distinctive change in state-business interactions was the new discourse of a provincial right to jobs and development, which underpinned policies for need-based job creation. The Marxist studies of the 1970s and 1980s were surprisingly silent about this aspect of decentralization, but political and social struggles were crucial in setting the agenda at key moments. The practical problem of local economic decline drove the creation of a strong regional policy in 1954-1955. It also provided much of the rhythm for the reinforcement of efforts in the following two decades—from the Poujadiste revolt in 1955 to the Western peasant *jacquerie* of 1961 and the renewed industrial reconversion conflicts after 1966.

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[54] Lung, "Modèles industriels," 86, 98-101.
[55] Most recently, Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 31-34; Damette and Scheibling, *Le Territoire français*, 214.
[56] Chevalier, "L'entreprise et la décentralisation industrielle," 28.
[57] I take part of my inspiration here from James Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936-1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

Another shortcoming of the spatial division of labor tradition is that it focuses attention on Taylorized assembly lines to the exclusion of other industrialization trends.[58] French *aménagement du territoire* drew on a longstanding tradition of regionalist thought and the geographic study of metropolitan economies.[59] Even early officials thus embraced the ideal of a holistic decentralization, in which top-notch industrial functions and the social elites who performed them would move to the provinces alongside blue-collar workers. The efforts of the 1930s and 1940s immediately highlighted the practical difficulties of such a program. If standardization increasingly liberated mass-production work from the Paris region's skilled labor, most other industrial functions remained tied to the capital. This concentration had economic roots: Paris boasted a unique agglomeration of expertise, administrations, and dynamic businesses. It was also an issue of social power. Employers could increasingly cut back on skilled workers, but they could not do without specialists, engineers, and managers, who thus had more power to keep their jobs in the city.[60]

The contradiction between an ideal of comprehensive decentralization and a territory that favored low-skill industrialization elicited a mixed response from government experts. Even as they adopted the idea that branch-plant industrialization was the most immediately realizable form of decentralization, they also invented the sweeping ambitions for dynamic metropolitan and regional economies contained in the *aménagement du territoire* idea. The Hexagon's powerful mayors, moreover, were there to keep the issue at the front of the political agenda, demanding that the government push research, high-tech industry, and even finance out of the capital. The quixotic nature of their most extreme utopias—such as trying to push elite universities and preparatory schools (*grandes écoles* and *lycées*) out to the provinces—simply highlights the extent of the holistic development ideal. On a more practical note, the 1955 legislation began the decentralization of public research and state-sponsored industry that proved crucial to new metropolitan complexes in cities like Toulouse, Rennes, and Grenoble. In her classic analysis of spatial divisions of labor, the geographer Doreen Massey complained

[58] Storper and Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative*, 31, 126.
[59] For a short summary, see Marie-Claire Robic, ed., *Couvrir le monde: Un grand XXe siècle de géographie française* (Paris: ADPF, 2006), 124-135.
[60] Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*, 276-281.

that British regional policy "considered only the numbers of jobs and paid no attention to their quality."[61] In France, the opposite was true. A generation of planners steeped in the ideal of regional renaissance immediately reacted against the mere Taylorization of territory.

In sum, it is necessary to bring the state, redistributive social policies, and urban centers into the discussion of postwar industrialization. These are precisely the goals of a second strand of social science research that figures heavily in the following chapters: the study of urban and regional governance in Europe.[62] Neil Brenner provides two framing concepts to organize research on the postwar years. The first is "spatial Keynesianism." States across Western Europe faced similar core-periphery imbalances. In response, between the 1950s and the 1970s they created unprecedented programs to spread industry, urban growth, infrastructure, and public services more evenly across their national territories. These equalizing efforts were rooted in a widely shared orthodoxy, which was Keynesian in spirit if not always theorized as such: regional redistribution would simultaneously promote national economic growth, social equity, and political integration.[63]

My narrative of the emergence of French regional policy draws a great deal on the spatial Keynesianism concept. French decentralization efforts in the 1930s and 1940s diverged—sometimes explicitly—from the Keynesian logics at work in the regional policies of Britain and the New Deal U.S. While the latter governments used the relocation of industrial investments to accelerate lagging regions' transition to a higher-wage economy and push excess labor into expanding manufacturing sectors, France's conservative planners were still focused on urban containment and rural preservation.

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[61] Ibid., 293-295.

[62] Neil Brenner, Patrick le Galès, and Michael Keating in particular provide long-term analyses of the shifting role of European states, regions, and cities in mediating uneven development. Brenner, *New State Spaces*; Patrick Le Galès, *Le Retour des villes en Europe* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2003); Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe*. For the literature on France in particular, see below.

[63] The term "spatial Keynesianism" was initially coined by Ron Martin and Peter Sunley, "The Post-Keynesian State and the Space Economy," in *Geographies of Economies*, ed. Jane Wills and Roger Lee (London: Arnold, 1997), 279-281. Brenner defines it as "the broad constellation of policy prescriptions mobilized during the postwar period in order to manage and stabilize regional and local economic development under Fordist-Keynesian capitalism." By spreading urban-industrial growth and high "standards of social welfare and service provision" to peripheral areas, policymakers hoped to achieve "the stimulation of consumer demand, the promotion of full employment, the extension of capital investments into marginalized areas, and the tendential convergence of per capita income levels." Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 115, 130-133, and chapter four more generally.

This is a main reason the latter failed to garner much support. By contrast, when a coalition for new policies did finally emerge in France in the 1950s, economics, politics, and regional ideals were more in line with the British and American traditions—and with the framework Brenner describes. Keynesian administrators and progrowth politicians turned to regional redistribution as a way to rapidly boost provincial employment, wages, and productivity, in response to severe urban and economic tensions. The legislation of 1954-1955, the bedrock of French regional policy, was an expression of spatial Keynesianism in its pure form.

On the other hand, the remapping of industrial and urban growth often went counter to the equalizing ideal Brenner describes. In terms of labor relations, we return to regional policy's contradictory relationship to Fordist-Keynesian capitalism. Rural industrialization was intended as much to contain as to stimulate the Keynesian logics of increasing consumer demand and expanding urban capital investments. It was in many respects a state-sponsored attack on the power of Parisian labor that stretched from the strikes of 1936 to the deindustrialization of the 1970s. And government efforts often remained couched in discourses that explicitly refuted homogenizing ideals, proclaiming the need to preserve a peasant society and the immutability of different regional capacities for growth.

In terms of territorial investments, meanwhile, the official discourse of equality overlapped with a great deal of projects that aggravated disparities. To begin with, the imperatives of maximizing national growth and preparing France for competition in an integrated Europe ran throughout the postwar period. Both goals provided arguments for concentrating resources on the Hexagon's most dynamic cities and regions—a logic defended by powerful business interests, government modernizers, and not least, the representatives of "strong" territories themselves. The 1950s and 1960s thus brought major concessions to the reinforcement of uneven development. The most spectacular was the 1961 creation of a powerful metropolitan agency, the Paris Region District (DRP), charged with redeveloping the French capital as a global city, but investments in high-growth regions in the provinces were equally substantial.

Much national equalization, moreover, came to rest on a very discriminating notion: "growth pole" theory. The DATAR made an unprecedented effort to concentrate

development on the provinces' largest cities and other strategic projects.[64] It assured that this was a redistributive project. Homogenizing development across regions required making tough choices locally, the planners explained, and the benefits of metropolitan investments would eventually trickle down to regional hinterlands. However, polarized growth was a deliberate affront to another logic of equalization: France's older political geography of communes and departments, which ensured a more even distribution of funds.[65] Predictably, most politicians denounced the new approach as profoundly unequal and economically misguided. It is not hard to see why. The city of Rennes, for example, boasted 95 percent of the industrial decentralization jobs created in Brittany in 1962, at which point the DATAR proposed to triple the city's population.[66] As for the Paris region, the provincial programs of the 1960s took the ideal of metropolitan concentration to their zenith, which would soon be trimmed back by politics and the economic slowdown.

Brenner's second framing concept is the "nationalization of state space." Briefly put, spatial Keynesian projects justified "top-down, standardized, and nationally encompassing approaches" to territorial governance. Central states amassed exceptional powers to direct development, submitted local governments to greater control, and approached national territories as integrated units.[67] In many respects, this concept also works particularly well for the French case. There was nothing more nationalizing than the notion of *aménagement du territoire* and the new political system created to

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[64] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 277-288; Georges Duby and Marcel Roncayolo, *La Ville aujourd'hui: Mutations urbaines, décentralisation et crise du citadin (Histoire de la France urbaine)* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 128-135.

[65] Pierre Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique: Bureaucrates et notables dans le système politique français* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 428. Parliament also had a territorially equalizing tendency challenged by *aménagement du territoire* policies. See Yohei Nakayama, "Les financements publics locaux et les disparités territoriales sur l'espace français des années 20 aux années 60," in *Service public et Aménagement du territoire*, ed. Michel Margairaz and Olivier Dard (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, forthcoming).

[66] Michel Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton 1950-2000* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1993), 145-146, 158; Jean Meyer, *Histoire de Rennes* (Toulouse: Privat, 1972), 448-449; Patrick Le Galès, "Economic Regeneration in Rennes: Local Social Dynamics and State Support," in *Leadership and Urban Regeneration: Cities in North America and Europe*, ed. Denis Judd and Michael Parkinson (London: Sage, 1990), 70.

[67] Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 114, 203, and chapter four more generally. On nationalizing tendencies in territorial governance, see also Le Galès, *Le Retour des villes en Europe*, 112-120, 125-137, 157-162; Patrick Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local: Une comparaison franco-britannique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993), 78, 130; Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 37-89.

implement it. After 1964, the Hexagon had a perfect hierarchy of national planners, homogenous regional administrations to coordinate state action, and local governments submitted to reinforced prefects and central financiers.[68] On the other hand, focusing too exclusively on national integration and a protective state—whose responsibility for economic growth allowed local governments to focus on social welfare—can hide other important changes in governance during the 1950s and 1960s.

One is the explosion of local government programs to compete for jobs and investments. The provision of industrial infrastructure, incentives, and business services for outside manufacturers proceeded in lockstep with national policies for regional development, spreading with alacrity over the course of the 1950s.[69] Contemporary observers voiced many of the same critiques that are leveled against the local entrepreneurialism of more recent decades.[70] Driven by a do-or-die narrative of regional decline and of a new territorial competition for jobs, provincial authorities got trapped in the logic of outbidding one another for investments, wasting taxpayer money and jeopardizing control over the local economy. Early programs also contained some of the crudest efforts to "sell" local communities and labor to potential employers.

These new local efforts had important limits. They were placed under state tutelage, were funded in large part by public financiers such as the Caisse des dépôts et des consignations (CDC), and above all coexisted with the assumption that the national government had a foremost responsibility to deliver jobs and investments to provincial communities. The late 1970s and 1980s brought crucial changes in these regards.[71] At

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[68] Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique*, 20-34. In terms of regionalism, Yann Fournis writes: "Le régionalisme fonctionnel est censé être le state ultime de la construction nationale." Yann Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne: La région et l'État (1950-2000)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), 111. On urban governance, see Gilles Pinson, "La gouvernance des villes françaises," *Métropoles* 7 (2010): 4-5, 11; Duby and Roncayolo, *La Ville aujourd'hui*, 92-93, 110-114.

[69] Bertrand Jalon, *Primes et zones industrielles* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1967). For public institutions and public-private partnerships, see Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 81, 86.

[70] For summaries of the literature on recent decades, see Le Galès, *Le Retour des villes en Europe*, 284-295; Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 172-178, 192-210; Thierry Oblet, *Gouverner la ville, les voies urbaines de la démocratie moderne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2005), 180-197; Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard, "The Entrepreneurial City and the "New Urban Politics,'" in *The Entrepreneurial City: Geographies of Politics, Regime and Representation*, ed. Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard (London: Wiley, 1998); Christian Le Bart, "Sur l'intervention économique des communes," *Politix* 2 (1989).

[71] Oblet, *Gouverner la ville*, 180-190; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 7-10, for a short summary of French trends in these years see especially 77-87, and for a detailed study of changes and continuities in Rennes from 1945 to the 1980s, 149-212; Dominique Lorrain, "La montée en puissance des villes," *Économie et Humanisme* 305 (1989); Patrick Le Galès and Gilles Pinson, "Local/Regional

the same time, though, national programs had a contradictory relationship to local entrepreneurialism. If the proliferation of provincial incentives undermined planners' ability to steer factories to priority zones and worried the Interior Ministry—charged with overseeing local budgets—they were also indispensable for the government's decentralization and development programs, especially since national incentives remained modest in France. As such, state authorities and public financiers fueled entrepreneurial activities as much as they fought them, often giving local authorities the encouragement, loans, and expertise they needed to engage the hunt for new employers. Above all, whatever their ideals, central planners had limited power. By 1962, provincial incentives outweighed the state spending on regional industrialization, and renewed efforts to rationalize this system ran aground on the substantial autonomy of municipalities and their national allies. In sum, the public regulation of industry was a rapidly expanding field of initiatives, in which national oversight was a crucial trend, but not the whole story.

Similar observations can be made for a second realm of governance: the territorial competition for public investments, which could be even fiercer than the pursuit of private employers. Here, too, national planning played an ambiguous role. On the one hand, it promised to distribute investments more fairly and rationally; no less important, administration control was a way of removing the divisive question of distribution from the politics of Parliament and departmental assemblies. On the other hand, regional and local conflicts were exacerbated by the main aspects of planning: the transparency it conferred to the geography of state spending, its deliberate discrimination among regions, and the sheer magnitude of the financial stakes involved. After 1964, in effect, central planners promised to submit all public investments to new geographic priorities. The Occitan regionalist Robert Lafont summed up the resulting climate well. As planning put jobs and credits on the table as never before, French politicians were forced to play out "une partie, longtemps occultée, de rivalités," leaving no doubt that "sous son uniformité de façade, l'État soit le cadre de violentes contradictions régionales."[72]

Governments and Centre-Periphery Relations in the Fifth Republic," in *The French Fifth Republic at Fifty: Beyond Stereotypes*, ed. Sylvain Brouard, Andrew M. Appleton, and Amy G. Mazur (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 216-223.

[72] Robert Lafont, *Décoloniser en France: Les régions face à l'Europe (Paris*: Gallimard, 1971), 13, 36.

Territorial conflicts operated across several main fault-lines. The opposition between Paris and the provinces was an old one, but it was renewed and exacerbated by decentralization policy and then the counter-attack operated by the Paris Region District. In the provinces, comprehensive regional planning and growth pole efforts likewise aggravated traditional tensions between city and countryside, and between rival towns and departments. Finally, the most novel conflict created by *aménagement du territoire* was the split between poorer regions to the south and west of France and stronger regions to the north and east. This new fault-line in French politics was a direct result of the announcement that the state would redistribute credits from developed to underdeveloped regions. In 1963, Pflimlin himself warned of an "affrontement entre deux Frances." Pflimlin had a clear interest in this stance: he was a representative of prosperous Alsace. But his threat was taken seriously by other national leaders, such as Charles de Gaulle and Michel Debré.[73] Once again, integrated national planning had contradictory outcomes—and it is not clear that a sense of national unity and fairness were the most important among them.

A final remark on territorial governance is that trends to national integration and homogenization ran into tremendous backlash and coexisted with the creation of splintered political spaces. Central planners initially pursued a very integrated system: twenty-two identical regions, each with a comprehensive development program that would be assimilated up into the national plan and down into local government budgets. But as the political scientist Pierre Grémion showed in his classic 1976 study, this program rested on a flawed notion: that local governments could be treated as simple nodes in a national development apparatus.[74] The reality was all different. Provincial officials flooded Paris with demands for spending while retaining their autonomy to pick and choose from government projects. The DATAR quickly turned to a strategy of disintegration. New metropolitan agencies for designated growth poles were intended precisely to disentangle strategic projects from two national systems: the traditional administration and the new comprehensive planning.[75] Grémion captured the resulting sense that the Republican state was being torn apart by a splintered geography of ad hoc

[73] Pflimlin in CNAT Groupe 1, minutes of 24 March 1963, CAC 19930278/194.
[74] Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique*, 370-373.
[75] Ibid., 433.

development agencies controlled by irresponsible technocrats, big city mayors, and national corporations.[76]

In sum, postwar France's increasingly powerful central state was an umbrella for a range of diverse and often competing projects. My work draws heavily on the vibrant research in French political science and political sociology on postwar governance, which deconstructs the image of a unified Jacobin state. As Patrick le Galès and Gilles Pinson summarize this research, "[t]here is no unequivocal account of what the Fifth Republic has brought about or changed in the field of local government and center-periphery relations."[77] National planning carried central control to its historic zenith, but it also empowered many progrowth coalitions in the provinces, giving them access to development spending, expertise, and new political spaces where they could outmaneuver competing local actors. It is no paradox, then, some of France's strongest regionalist movements and powerful, even "presidential" mayors owed their success to unprecedented central oversight.[78] In other cases, regional and metropolitan projects turned into open conflicts between local politicians and astonishingly *dirigiste* state planners.[79] Quite often the reforms of the 1960s were simply neutralized by the existing channels of political and administrative power: prefects, ministerial services, and Parliament. Technocratic planning, in effect, was an imperfect tool for reforming an entrenched political system.[80]

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[76] Ibid., 440-462.
[77] Le Galès and Pinson, "Local/Regional Governments," 208.
[78] Ibid., 214-216; Le Galès, "Economic Regeneration in Rennes;" Patrice Duran, "Élites et régionalisation. Une régionalisation ambiguë pour des élites introuvables," in *Le Général de Gaulle et les élites*, ed. Serge Berstein, Pierre Birnbaum, and Jean-Pierre Rioux (Paris: La Découverte, 2008), 186-188; Nicolas Hatzfeld, *Les Gens d'usine: 50 ans d'histoire à Peugeot-Sochaux* (Paris: Atelier, 2002); Benoît Littardi, "Une capitale régionale face à l'aménagement du territoire. L'exemple de la commune de Besançon (vers 1950-1977)," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 182-183; Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City*, 109, 111-124; Duby and Roncayolo, *La Ville aujourd'hui*, 637-661. Such alliances did not preclude fierce conflicts. As Romain Pasquier writes on regionalization in Brittany, the relationship between regionalists and state officials was "à la fois coopératif et antagoniste," and it changed over time. Romain Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions: Une comparaison France/Espagne* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 45. Yann Fournis calls the Bretons' rapport with the state "un mélange savant de légitimisme politique et de contestation fonctionnelle." Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 112.
[79] Bernard Paillard, *Damnation de Fos* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1981).
[80] Le Galès and Pinson, "Local/Regional Governments," 212-214; Patrick Le Lidec, "Les Maires dans la République: L'association des maires de France, élément constitutif des régimes politiques français depuis 1907" (doctoral thesis, Université Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2001); Yves Meny, "France," in *Centre-Periphery*

The spatial division of labor idea and the above research on territorial governance offer national and even European frameworks of analysis. Most of the new historical research on postwar France, by contrast, takes the perspective of regional or local societies in interaction with central authorities.[81] My debt to a number of these excellent studies is clear in the following chapters. Here I will focus on the analytic limits of this local-national vision, arguing that much of the *aménagement du territoire* story concerns the spaces in between France's cities and regions. Good examples can be found in two of the most dynamic historiographies, on the Paris region and Brittany respectively.

Historians of Paris and its suburbs have emphasized the continuity of the government's policy of containing the capital between the late 1920s and the early 1960s. They narrate decentralization policy as an illogical attack on Paris and its people, for good reason. Containment doctrine was astonishingly biased and contentious. Drawing on anti-Parisian prejudices that dated back decades, if not centuries, and on an elite bias against the capital's proletariat, state planners refused basic urban amenities like land and affordable housing in an attempt to suffocate expansion. Their no-growth stance endlessly antagonized the capital's politicians and business interests. Not least, containment proved fundamentally flawed. Administrative fiat and under-investment were as unable to block Paris' growth as they were incompatible with its status as France's only global city. Annie Fourcaut puts the matter starkly: "La conception graviériste, hygiéniste et antiurbaine de l'étouffement d'une capitale monstrueuse qui dévore le pays, si elle permet une projection sur l'avenir du territoire national, interdisait de penser le futur de la région."[82]

Relations in Western Europe, ed. Yves Meny and Vincent Wright (London: Sage, 1985). For a comparison of a success and a failure, see Pasquier's study of regionalization in Centre and Bretagne in Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions*, 33-55.

[81] Besides the literature on Paris and Brittany listed below, see especially Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City*; Littardi, "Une capitale régionale face à l'aménagement du territoire. L'exemple de la commune de Besançon (vers 1950-1977);" Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975);" Frédéric Saunier, "De la maternité à l'orphelinat: l'aménagement de la Basse vallée de la Seine," *Vingtieme Siecle Revue d Histoire* 79 (2003); Florent Le Bot and Laurence Héry, "La chaussure en France au XXe siècle: la fin d'une industrie? Comparaison du SPL fougerais et de l'entreprise Noël à Vitré, face aux crises des années 1930 et des années 1970-1980," in *1974-1984, une décennie de désindustrialisation?* , ed. Pierre Lamard and Nicolas Stoskopf (Paris: Picard, 2009).

[82] Annie Fourcaut, "Les premiers grands ensembles en région parisienne. Ne pas refaire la banlieue?" *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 121, 130. For other historiography organized around the containment-expansion split of the early 1960s, see Rémi Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne"

Yet in the realm of industry, state planners' goals for Paris had a complex and often ironic relationship to broader business logics, urban trends, and the capital's changing role in the national economy. The period historians associate with containment policy corresponded almost exactly with the historic zenith of the Paris region's manufacturing might and blue-collar population. Both crested in 1962. It was thus the progrowth Paris Region District, created a year earlier, which governed over the decline of the capital's manufacturing base and the turn to deindustrialization in the region's center.[83]

The first half of this story, before 1955, is a case of containment's failure, but one which requires rethinking the notion of a French tradition of anti-Parisian planning. The supposedly Malthusian urbanists of the 1930s-1950s repeatedly bowed to the reality that industrial growth and powerful business interests took priority over decongesting the capital. Indeed, it could be argued that they treated Parisian manufacturing more generously than officials in comparable cities such as London and New York. The middle of the story—which concerns the passage of strong decentralization measures in 1955—requires a national focus. Real policies for industrial containment only emerged when Paris dominated French industrial growth to a historically unprecedented degree. Perhaps more than at any other time in the nation's history, it seemed that decentralization would bring more gains in terms of national growth, social uplift, and the profits of Parisian manufacturers themselves than costs in terms of disruption and

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(doctoral thesis, Ecole d'architecture Paris-Villemin, 1990); Loïc Vadelorge, "Comment faire l'histoire administrative des villes nouvelles?" in *Gouverner les villes nouvelles: L'État et les collectivités locales (1960-2005)*, ed. Loïc Vadelorge (Paris: Manuscrit, 2005), 45-48; Rosemary Wakeman, "Nostalgic Modernism and the Invention of Paris in the Twentieth Century," *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004); Marchand, *Les Ennemis de Paris*; Annie Fourcaut, "Conclusions du séminaire," in *Gouverner les villes nouvelles. L'État et les collectivités locales (1960-2005)*, ed. Loïc Vadelorge (Paris: Manuscrit, 2005); Michel Carmona, *Le Grand Paris: L'évolution de l'idée d'aménagement de la Région parisienne* (Bagneux: Girotypo, 1979), 659-665. Such narratives play an important role in current public debate; many recent voices in the planning community emphasize the folly of Paris region containment. See for instance Laurent Davezies, *La République et ses territoires: La circulation invisible des richesses* (Paris: Seuil, 2008).

[83] Jacques Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation de la banlieue parisienne," in *Ouvriers en banlieue, XIXe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jacques Girault (Paris: Editions de l'Atelier, 1998), 104-105. On the history of the growth and decline of Paris region production, also see Jean Bastié, *Géographie du Grand Paris* (Paris: Masson, 1984); Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle." In other words, the realty of industrial job loss is the opposite of the narrative Bernard Marchand proposes when he claims that Delouvrier finally inversed a logic by which "une véritable haine de la grande ville eut pillé la capitale de ses activités et des ses emplois pendant deux décennies." Bernard Marchand, *Paris, histoire d'une ville (XIXe-XXe siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 1993), 310.

displacement in the capital. Finally, the end of the story—in which the Paris region began to shed blue-collar work—owed as much to corporate logics and progrowth redevelopment as to the containment measures passed in 1955. Clearing factories out of the region's center was essential to the promotion of Paris as the nation's headquarters and as a globally competitive metropolis, not in contradiction with it.[84] In the words of geographer Félix Damette, "[l]a phase de décentralisation a été en réalité la phase de métropolisation"—not two successive steps.[85]

Here, then, is a more complex narrative of growth and decline that in some ways fulfilled the ideals of "anti-urban" planners like Gravier, but only partly overlapped with their initiatives and certainly did not fit their timing. Deindustrialization cannot be understood without the containment efforts of the 1920s-1960s. The decentralization doctrine finalized under Vichy and the lobby of provincial interests established in the 1950s—who were determined to take their piece of the pie from the capital—not only paved the way for the 1955 measures, but also ensured that they continued to be applied into the 1970s, well after wrenching deindustrialization processes became evident in Paris' working-class suburbs. Yet Paris' extraordinary domination of national growth, its new place in the production chain of multi-branch corporations, and a government policy of urban expansion that promoted the capital at the expense of its least fortunate residents played equally important roles.

The historiography on Brittany covers the emergence of *aménagement du territoire* from an opposing perspective.[86] After 1950, this peripheral rural region became the star of the aggressive new efforts to develop the provinces, forging a vast

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[84] Jérôme Monod, the head of the DATAR, made this explicit in 1972: "c'est dans la seule mesure où Paris sera allégé de ses services et des emplois qui ne lui sont nécessaire ni utiles qu'il sera techniquement possible de créer les conditions matérielles donnant à la place de Paris le maximum de chances d'accroître son rôle financier international." Cited in Aydalot, *Dynamique spatiale*, 304.

[85] Damette and Scheibling, *Le Territoire français*, 102. See also H. V. Savitch, *Post-Industrial Cities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 113-116; Félix Damette, "Liaisons dangereuses: une histoire des rapports Paris/province," *Mouvements* 13 (2001); Jean-Paul Alduy, "L'aménagement de la région de Paris entre 1930 et 1975: de la planification à la politique urbaine," *Sociologie du travail* 2 (1979): 191-199; Jean Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine dans la région parisienne, 1945-1972* (Paris: Mouton, 1976), 9.

[86] Florent Le Bot and Fabrice Marzin, "Le Mai 1968 breton et ses acteurs face à une révolution pompidolienne en matière d'économie des territoires," in *1968, entre libération et libéralisation: La grande bifurcation*, ed. Danielle Tartakowsky and Michel Margairaz (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010); Fabrice Marzin, "Le rôle des politiques et des planificateurs dans le développement industriel de la Bretagne. Autour de la 'vocation électronique' de la Bretagne," in *Communications et territoires*, ed. Pierre-Noël Favennec (Paris: Lavoisier, 2006); Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*; Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions*; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*.

coalition of political, business, and labor leaders behind a program of rapid industrialization in the new Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts bretons (CELIB). As such, Brittany is the perfect case for narrating *aménagement du territoire* as a bottom-up demand for national equalization and progressive reforms. The region's progrowth efforts broke with a past of economic decline, protectionist business policies, and the taint of sometimes reactionary regionalism. Regional efforts obtained a number of concessions from the central state—whose services all too often relapsed into a logic of prioritizing high-growth regions in development funding—and helped push through broader regional development reforms that benefited the entire nation. The new Breton research is thus a necessary counterpoint to an *aménagement du territoire* story too often told as a top-down initiative of central bureaucrats.[87]

At the same time, new industrialization had a less progressive face. Fitting Breton communities and labor into the logics of outside investors had a tense relationship with the professed goals of modernization and social uplift. New development thus created intense regional conflicts.[88] Here too, what is most overlooked in the current research is the contradictory role that Breton development efforts played in the broader national economy. To begin with, the subtext of western job creation was the stealing of Parisian factories. The region's new development experts advertised Brittany's labor as cheaper and more docile than the capital's workers; they then went "fishing" (*pêcher*) for Parisian manufacturers susceptible to pick up and move west.[89] More broadly, such bottom-up regionalism provided much of the political pressure for a vigorous containment policy, which historians of Paris associate with the state. The Bretons were also in competition with other provincial regions—and explicitly saw things in those terms. The CELIB's leaders presented their campaign for state development spending as a fight against the instinctive Jacobinism of a centralist administration, the budgetary conservatism of the Finance Ministry, and the unreasonable growth ambitions of the Paris region, but their demands often ran aground on a fear that Brittany's gains were

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[87] Pasquier, "La Régionalisation française revisitée."
[88] Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*; Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*.
[89] As the top prospector, Georges Pierret, recalls the hunt: "Reste à trouver des cobayes! C'est-à-dire des industriels parisiens auxquels on a refusé le permis de construire dont ils avaient besoin pour développer leur production." The list of factories being expelled from the capital by government planners was "livre d'or" for Pierret's line of work. Georges Pierret, *La Face cachée de l'Union: Une aventure vécue* (Rennes: Apogée, 1997), 34-35, 46; George Pierret, *Mai breton* (Paris: Euregio, 1978).

jeopardizing the interests of other provincial regions. When Pierre Pflimlin denounced the antagonism between East and West, he was talking about the CELIB.

My attempt to analyze the interaction between territories through state development programs owes a great deal to two overseas historiographies. I came to both literatures by following the gaze of postwar policymakers themselves, who often used international comparison to make sense of French trends. The first is Fred Cooper's work on imperial and international development. Overseas development ideas directly influenced debates on provincial modernization, and much of Cooper's analysis of development ideas' emergence, precepts, and competing versions informs my analysis. One insight in particular runs throughout the following pages. The call for state-led modernization could be a "discourse of control" or a "discourse of entitlement," justifying elite claims to control local economies but also giving politicians and labor a platform to demand jobs and spending.[90]

The second overseas historiography concerns the remapping of population and industry in Great Britain and the United States. Britain had a clear appeal for French planners: the two nations had formally similar spatial and political structures, and officials in London pioneered a vigorous decentralization policy years before their counterparts in Paris.[91] Yet the American example had a growing place in French thinking, both as a model and as a foil. Unlike in Britain, whose peripheral regions were often already industrialized, in the U.S. industry decentralized from a historic manufacturing belt to the vast rural regions of the South and the West. By the 1940s, the American South boasted record-breaking rates of industrialization with a recipe that rural

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[90] Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard, "Introduction," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4, 9, 34. See also Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[91] Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor*; Peter Scott, "The Worst of Both Worlds: British Regional Policy, 1951–64," *Business History* 38 (1996); Peter Scott, "British Regional Policy 1945-51: A Lost Opportunity," *Twentieth Century British History* 8 (1997); Peter Scott, "Dispersion Versus Decentralization: British Location of Industry Policies and Regional Development 1945–60," *Economy and Society* 26 (1997); D. W. Parsons, *The Political Economy of British Regional Policy* (London: Croom Helm, 1986); Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning*.

France could replicate: a mix of cheap farm labor, aggressive state and local growth efforts, and the redistributionist federal policy invented under the New Deal.[92]

Understandably, then, the U.S. historiography raises issues that have clear echoes in the French case. For over two decades, American historians have explored the multiple tensions of industrial decentralization: its contradictory nature as a movement of inter-regional equalization and as a means of undercutting northern labor; the political conflicts between low-wage development models and higher-earning job creation; and the simultaneous emergence of Sunbelt cities and poorly paid branch plants. On either side of the North/South divide, historians grapple with the long-term processes of regional change. Recent work on northern deindustrialization emphasizes the long timeframes of urban-industrial disinvestment, from the 1930s to the mass factory closures of the 1970s and 1980s—an insight with clear relevance for the history of Paris manufacturing.[93] Southern historians, meanwhile, have long debated the mix of continuity and change in this conservative rural region. The South's most protectionist politics crumbled in the rush to build up industry and cities, but some traditional aspects of southern society fit disappointingly well with national and then global competition: cheap rural labor, weak unions, and pro-business policies.[94]

Finally, like *aménagement du territoire* itself, my work is at the juncture of recent French history on industry, economics, labor, urbanism, and the state. In all these fields, historians have proposed periodizations that complicate the political and institutional

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[92] Robert O. Self and Thomas J. Sugrue, "The Power of Place: Race, Political Economy, and Identity in the Postwar Metropolis," in *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, ed. Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 27.

[93] Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 1-2, 5-7; Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, "The Meanings of Deindustrialization," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, ed. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2003), 7; Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 6, 127-130; Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 92, 129-130; Joshua Freeman, *Working-Class New York: Life and Labor Since World War II* (New York: New Press, 2000), 165-166.

[94] Cobb, *The Selling of the South*; Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*; David L. Carlton and Peter Coclanis, *The South, the Nation, and the World: Perspectives on Southern Economic Development* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2003); D. R. Goldfield, "The Rise of the Sunbelt: Urbanization and Industrialization," *A Companion to the American South* (2002); Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Philip Scranton, ed., *The Second Wave: Southern Industrialization from the 1940s to the 1970s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001).

ruptures of World War II and the Fifth Republic. And the best recent scholarship has emphasized the need to study big ideas about economic and social change through the concrete workings of state institutions in analyses that bring together politics, bureaucracy, and social movements.[95] In return, I hope this dissertation will usefully advance French historians' recent interest in territories and more broadly demonstrate a central insight of urban and regional studies: that geographic space and uneven development were central to the making of contemporary France.[96] This is not meant as a general claim, but rather as a historical one. Many postwar actors viewed industrial decentralization and *aménagement du territoire* as marginal to their concerns much of the time. At particular moments, however, remapping the Hexagon's population and production became central to the politics of economic growth, the restructuring of industry and class relations, the planning of cities, and the reform of the state and politics. Perhaps more than at any other time in France's history, postwar regional policy kept the problem of geographic imbalance and the collective production of space at the center of the nation's attention.

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[95] From a broad literature: Margairaz, *État, les finances et l'économie*; Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era*; Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*; Marc Olivier Baruch, *Servir l'État français: L'administration en France de 1940 à 1944* (Paris: Fayard, 1997); Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*; Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*; Loïc Vadelorge, ed., *Gouverner les villes nouvelles: L'État et les collectivités locales (1960-2005)* (Paris: Manuscrit, 2005); Alain Chatriot, *La Démocratie sociale à la française: L'expérience du Conseil national économique, 1924-1940* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002); Gabrielle Hecht, *The Radiance of France: Nuclear Power and National Identity after World War II* (Boston: MIT Press, 1998); Dulong, *Moderniser la politique, aux origines de la Ve République*; Philippe Bezes, *Réinventer l'État: Les réformes de l'administration française, 1962-2008* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2009).

[96] Laurent Tissot and Francesco Garufo, "Un territoire parle-t-il?" in *Histoires de territoires: Les territoires industriels en question, XVIIIe-XXe siècles*, ed. Laurent Tissot, et al. (Neuchâtel: Alphil-Presses universitaires suisses, 2010), 9-10. I have cited much of the recent work on *aménagement du territoire* above. It has been gathered in several useful collections: François Caron, ed., *L' Aménagement du territoire, 1958-1974* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); Vincent Guigueno, ed., "Dossier l'aménagement du territoire," *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire* 79 (July-September 2003); Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas, *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002). There has also been a revival of work on industrial territories in French history. An interest on industrial "districts" and "local production systems" motivated a series of colloquia, including a major research program launched in 2003 by Jean-Claude Daumas, Pierre Lamard, and Laurent Tissot. See Jean-Claude Daumas, Pierre Lamard, and Laurent Tissot, *Les Territoires de l'industrie en Europe, 1750-2000: Entreprises, régulations et trajectoires* (Besançon: Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2007); Laurent Tissot et al., *Histoires de territoires: Les territoires industriels en question, XVIIIe-XXe siècles* (Neuchâtel: Alphil-Presses universitaires suisses, 2010). On industrial reconversion, see Olivier Dard and Jean-François Eck, eds., *Aménageurs, territoires et entreprises en Europe du Nord-Ouest au second XXe siècle* (Metz: Centre régional universitaire lorrain d'histoire, 2010).

CHAPTER ONE

The Division of Labor: Toward a Decentralization Doctrine

In 1945, Jean-François Gravier, serving as the government's new director of industrial decentralization, complained that labor exercised "une influence tyrannique" on the location of French industry.[1] Manufacturers in high-growth industries such as cars, electronics, and aircraft could not do without the blue-collar workforce amassed in a handful of major industrial centers. The Paris region in particular boasted a labor force of unparalleled size, skills, and diversity; this was the number one reason that corporate officials resisted moving production out of the capital.[2] Attacking the power of Parisian workers was thus a precondition for correcting the polarization of French growth.

Gravier's thinking was rooted in the interwar and Vichy years. When government reformers set out to decentralize manufacturing in the 1920s and 1930s, they it did to a large extent out of the sense that industrial Paris had become a danger for the nation. Fear of the capital's radicalized working class and worries that urban factories would be targeted in event of a new air war proved as important as the desire to make room for urban renovation in justifying decentralization. France's rapid surrender to Germany, wartime bombings, and the reactionary politics of the Vichy regime only heightened the vitriol against industrial Paris and emboldened conservative utopias of kicking urban workers back to the countryside. It was in this decidedly anti-urban climate that Vichy created a team of experts in its new planning agency, the Délégation générale à l'Équipement national (DGEN), to prepare a decentralization doctrine. Led by the businessman Gabriel Dessus, the team undertook far-ranging studies, which heavily influenced postwar policy.

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[1] Jean-François Gravier, "Nécessité de la décentralisation industrielle," *Bulletin d'information et de documentation* (May 1945). Gravier was charged to head the Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism's new "Bureau de décentralisation industrielle" in 1945. Efi Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," in *Tissu industriel, planification spatiale des activités économiques et rapports sociopolitiques dans la métropole parisienne (1920-1950)*, ed. Efi Markou, Danièle Fraboulet, and Catherine Rhein (Paris: Ministère de l'Équipement, 2005), 119.

[2] Gravier, "Nécessité de la décentralisation industrielle."

The planners' bias and ambition were matched by their inability to impose their agenda. Manufacturers' stiff resistance to decentralization disappointed hopes that the cheaper land and labor of the provinces would draw production out of the capital. By the 1930s, the lesson was clear: only state intervention could get Parisian industry to move. Yet many in the Third Republic adamantly opposed *dirigisme* and most new powers for urban planning and relocating defense production remained weak. With one exception—the nationalized aircraft industry—decentralization programs amounted to little before the German advance sent workers and employers fleeing south.

Interwar dynamics were particularly devastating for the project of rapidly shrinking Paris' proletariat. It soon became clear that displacing factories and especially workers was a horrifically costly and contentious endeavor—a failed project in terms of economics and politics alike. With their high salaries and union protections, Parisian workers were too powerful to deport and too expensive to entice to the provinces. Simply put, buying social peace by giving labor a better life in small-town France would cost a fortune. Like most of the manufacturers who decentralized production in the interwar years, many of the DGEN experts therefore shifted their focus. The transfer of factories and workers gave way to decentralized growth: starting from scratch in the provinces and forging a new workforce out of cheaper rural labor. Perhaps the single most important lesson of the wartime studies was this: employers could simply liberate themselves from their Parisian workers by building extremely standardized assembly lines that even unskilled provincials could operate.

This was an effective way of undermining Parisian labor in the long term, but in the short run it signaled a clear retreat from Vichy's initial ambition of quickly eradicating urban radicalism. Moreover, creating major production sites in rural France itself proved more chaotic, costly, and contentious than initially imagined. When Parisian manufacturers decentralized, they often found themselves stuck with new paternalist responsibilities, in particular providing housing and transportation for their workers. In addition, companies that were used to the Paris region's vast workforce often paid insufficient attention to choosing their new job markets. They then fell prey to an imbroglio of recruitment shortages, wage concessions, and resistance from local business interests angry about labor competition. The DGEN experts thus concluded that

orchestrating manufacturers' profitable integration in provincial communities, like provoking their departure from Paris in the first place, would require a determined state effort.

1. Imbalance and Decentralization in Interwar France

Perhaps more than in any other country, France's regional policies had their origins in a fear of large industrial cities, above all the Paris region. Certainly, foreign decentralization efforts in the 1930s and 1940s contained many of the same anti-urban tropes as in France: agrarian arguments against the concentration of population in congested cities, a reaction to working-class strife, and fear of the military danger posed by urban industry. From Henry Ford's experiment with "village industries" to Nazi Germany's elaborate program of industrial dispersion, French experts had plenty of company in their reaction against urban industry.[3] Yet most governments had a clear pro-growth agenda. The Depression convinced state and federal administrations in the U.S. to launch a determined program for industrializing the rural South. It led authorities in London on a similar quest to stomp out industrial unemployment in Britain's traditional manufacturing regions, in the north and east. And Nazi Germany had its own pro-growth agenda of sorts: ethnically colonizing eastern occupied territories. In interwar France, however, industrializing the provinces took a back seat to Paris containment in the concrete emergence of a decentralization policy.[4]

At first glance, this seems like a paradox, since there had long been calls for provincial revival and dispersed industrialization. Already in the 1820s, statisticians

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[3] The Dessus team studied the Nazi example. See the 1942 note on Nazi spatial planning in CAC 19770777/1 and Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947), 288-289. For the French fascination with Ford's decentralization efforts, see Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 90. On Ford's projects themselves, see Howard P. Segal, *Recasting the Machine Age: Henry Ford's Village Industries* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

[4] The particularity of the French approach to decentralization became clear to Gabriel Dessus when he went to London in 1945 to study British regional policy. France and Britain had formally similar spatial structures: in both countries, recent industrial growth was dominated by the national capital. But when Dessus found out that his interlocutors were more interested in sending jobs to Britain's northern industrial conurbations than with shrinking London, he exclaimed, "The position here is really the reverse of that in France—there were are trying to decentralize the already congested areas, but here you are proposing to make the areas larger?" "Notes of the conversation between Monsieur Dessus and Mr. Jay of the Board of Trade, Millbank, on 1st Aug. 1945," CAC 19770777/1. See also the chapter "Une expérience étrangère: la Grande Bregtagne," in Gabriel Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique de localisation de l'industrie," in *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 81-88.

documented the existence of "two Frances": a more industrial, urban, and prosperous northeast and a more rural and poorer southwest. This was the basic framework of regional inequalities that would be revived in the 1950s, and it sparked redistributive utopias that stunningly resembled postwar development efforts.[5] The remainder of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of a regionalist movement, decentralist ideals among utopian socialists, and new efforts at integrating the national territory, in part through vast infrastructure networks like roads, railroads, and canals.[6]

Overall, however, national integration did more to aggravate regional inequalities than to correct them. Population followed industry, and the majority of French departments lost both.[7] This was the regression that Gravier described in his classic history of the "French desert."[8] Regional emigration, mixed with France's peculiarly low birthrate, led to demographic decline and even urban shrinkage in broad swathes of the provinces.[9] The waning of rural industry played a key role in these changes. In the nineteenth century, the Hexagon had preserved a tradition of rural industrialization and mixed lifestyles: peasant-workers or artisan-workers, who identified primarily with another community than the industrial working class.[10] Many aspects of this tradition survived in the twentieth century. France maintained a large peasant population—nearly half the population lived in rural areas on the eve of World War II—and dense ranks of

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[5] Roger Chartier, "La ligne Saint-Malo-Genève," in *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), 745. In 1838 a Saint-Simonian engineer, Michel Chevalier, even produced what geographer Marcel Roncayolo calls a "[v]éritable plan d'aménagement du territoire" that contained stunning similarities to the projects of the 1950s and 1960s. Marcel Roncayolo, "L'aménagement du territoire (18ème-20ème siècles)," in *Histoire de la France, tome 1: L'espace français*, ed. André Burguière and Jacques Revel (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 530-533, 537.

[6] Marc Desportes and Antoine Picon, *De l'Espace au territoire: L'aménagement en France (16e-20e siècles)* (Paris: Presses de l'ENPC, 1997), 69-107; Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); François Caron, "Les réseaux et les politiques d'aménagement du territoire. L'exemple des chemins de fer," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002); Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, "The Meanings of Deindustrialization," in *Beyond the Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, ed. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2003). On the regionalist and garden city traditions, see Peter Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 27-54; Clyde Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community: Planning, Politics and Social Context* (New York: Wiley, 1984), 32-33, 51.

[7] For a very good overview, see Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 561-603.

[8] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 23-80.

[9] Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 581-591.

[10] Gérard Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française (XIXème-XXème siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), 60, 77-98, 112-118, 264-267.

small manufacturers. These small producers were protected by the state.[11] Some new high-growth sectors also turned to rural industrialization, from the coalfields in the department of Nord to the Peugeot car factories, the Michelin auto works, or the new Alpine electronics sector.[12]

Nonetheless, the dominant trend was toward regional and urban concentration. The regions of generalized expansion could be counted on one hand: the manufacturing heartland of Lorraine and Nord-Pas-de-Calais in the northeast, the new southeastern industrial poles of Lyon and Grenoble after 1900, and above all the Paris region. France's capital benefited from an unbeatable growth recipe. Alongside its role as political capital and its place at the center of the nation's transportation networks, Paris increasingly dominated banking, elite services, corporate headquarters, and education. The capital gained the status of the nation's unparalleled manufacturing center when World War I funded a tremendous buildup of high-growth industrial sectors there.[13]

Manufacturers in Paris benefited from the incomparable concentration of labor that so antagonized Gravier. They also had access to other industrial firms, the economies of scale and innovative synergies that came with the clustering of production sites, and direct access France and Europe's main markets. And not least, they boasted close proximity to the state administrations that doled out public contracts, research institutes, elite business services, and financiers. It is no wonder that French reformers feared for so long that the Hexagon was an idiosyncratic exception to the trend of manufacturing deconcentration in advanced economies.[14]

The last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth thus pushed the core-periphery imbalance to an extreme in metropolitan France. This polarization only reinforced the venerable notion that French society had a particular "balance"—with the right mix of agriculture and industry, cities and countryside—which should be defended against rapid economic change and the growth of big cities. A remarkable range of politicians and thinkers took up the discourse of balance. The ranks of Left and Right, big industrialists and petty producers, economic modernizers and

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[11] Robert Gildea, *France since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 102.
[12] Denis Woronoff, *Histoire de l'industrie en France du XVIe siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1998 [1994]), 460-464.
[13] Ibid., 397-402; Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 581-591.
[14] Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 585; Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 34-48, 92-93.

conservative ruralists all contained voices who vaunted peasants, regions, and human-scale factories as emblems of French society that needed defending.[15]

Industrial decentralization had a clear role to play in fighting uneven development.[16] The problem was that a determined coalition for change, which was necessary to overcome old geographic trends and entrenched interests, never emerged in the provinces.[17] The main effort to foster such a pro-growth national agenda was the government's creation of "economic regions" in 1917. The loose associations of existing Chambers of Commerce were the initiative of the Minister of Commerce, Étienne Clémentel. The wartime need to increase France's production—which Clémentel hoped to carry over into peacetime—mingled with regionalist thinking and recent geographic work on regional economies to justify this state-led effort to industrialize the provinces.[18]

In many respects, however, Clémentel's project was a conservative one. The key promise of this brand of economic regionalism was that new industrialization could be undertaken without upsetting rural rootedness, regional particularities, and existing balances of power. Dispersing factories and growth was supposed to shore up, not break down, a rural social order. Clémentel himself rose to power defending *les petits* in his rural Puy-de-Dôme district against the bigwigs in Paris. He now sought to preserve France's peasantry, which he called "la base même de l'édifice social." Just as importantly, Clémentel and his successors tiptoed around existing interests, giving local officials plenty of freedom to adapt the economic regions to their liking—or to simply let

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[15] Shanny Peer, *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 18; Richard Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France: Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 86-98.

[16] Efi Markou, "Réformer la ville, résoudre la question agraire. L'ordre urbain d'Émile Vandervelde (1895-1910)," *Cahiers Jaurès* 3 (July-December, 2005); Jackie Clarke, "Imagined Productive Communities: Industrial Rationalisation and Cultural Crisis in 1930s France," *Modern & Contemporary France* 8 (2000).

[17] Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 561-581, 602-603. It is not impossible that the state of the historical research on interwar period hides a more complex story, but in comparison with the determined efforts to decongest Paris and the pro-growth provincial lobby that emerged after 1950, projects for provincial industrialization remained weak in the first half of the century.

[18] Alain Chatriot, "Les 'Régions économiques' d'une guerre à l'autre: aménagement du territoire, discours, projets et pratiques," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 54-58.

them flounder.[19] The latter was the most common outcome. Most of the new regions remained modest entities, only regaining steam in the buildup to World War II.[20]

Some provincial elites did seize the occasion to further boosterist efforts, such as improving transportation, providing economic data, and coordinating city plans. The Alps region around Grenoble was the darling of this new pro-growth spirit. Political, university, and business elites promoted the arrival of high-tech industries like radio communications. They already vaunted the regional development recipe that would serve them well for much of the century: hydroelectric energy, a good city and university, the Sunbelt attractions of good weather and ski slopes, and not least an impoverished and hard-working mountain people.[21] But Grenoble was an interwar star precisely because it was so unique. Moreover, the region's boosters claimed that they owed the success of their development recipe to a natural geography which could not be replicated elsewhere. They were indebted to the Alps not only for their cheap electricity and their breathtaking landscapes, but even for the particular qualities of their labor—a "race plus vigoureuse et plus sobre" than in other regions.[22]

Several other development programs emerged. In Toulouse, an early center of French aviation, business leaders undertook projects such as airport construction and defending the city's position in national air traffic, as well as economic surveys, the promotion of business links, and an economic exposition. Yet the most aggressive development efforts in Toulouse only emerged after the government announced its

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[19] Philippe Veitl writes that the economic regions were meant to "concilier...le sol et l'usine." Industrial expansion would revive, not undermine, "une conception du lien social héritée du monde rural et reposant sur l'idée d'un enracinement collectif du peuple français dans le territoire." Philippe Veitl, "Les Régions économiques Clémentel et l'invention de la région des Alpes françaises" (doctoral thesis, Université de Grenoble, 1992), 53-54, 67, 71-72, 93-98.

[20] Economic regions generated regional economic data and studies (sometimes with new regional economy jobs in local universities), coordinated business and administrative services, worked on transportation and energy, and did technical training. Jacqueline Garel, "La construction sociale d'une notion géographique: La notion de groupements régionaux d'après Vidal de la Blache (1880-1940)" (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris I, 2000), 422-433; Chatriot, "Les 'Régions économiques';" Veitl, "Les Régions économiques Clémentel"; Annie Sevin, "Les Acteurs économiques et le régionalisme lorrain de la Belle Époque," *Annales de géographie* 115 (2006); Gilles Laferté, "L'homme politique, l'industriel et les universitaires. Alliance à la croisée du régionalisme dans l'entre-deux-guerres?" *Politix* 17 (2004).

[21] Veitl, "Les Régions économiques Clémentel."

[22] The quote is Charles Pinat speaking to the Société d'Économie sociale, Ibid., 205. On the importance the Alps boosters attached to natural milieu, see Veitl, 340-345.

program for decentralizing war production.[23] Other projects of economic regionalism emerged around major infrastructure projects: regional electricity grids and the damming of the Rhône River. These projects had an explicitly equalizing logic, since the new centers of cheap electricity were in the southeast and southwest. But cheap regional electricity became moot with the creation of a national grid and the Rhône project had barely begun on the eve of World War II.[24] Above all, the Third Republic fares least well in a comparative framework: unlike in the U.S. and Britain, the Depression did not lead to a strong policy of provincial industrialization.[25] In the 1930s, the dominant dynamics of territorial development thus remained those of the nineteenth century: a handful of regional initiatives, but no national response to the France's increasingly polarized geography.[26]

France's decentralization policy emerged instead from the need to rein in the tremendous demographic and spatial expansion of the Paris region. Here the goals of urban planning, rooting out working-class radicalism, and military decentralization coalesced during the course of the late 1920s and 1930s, thanks in part to the participation of key reformers and politicians in all three projects.[27] In the realm of planning, the 1920s saw the establishment of an aggressive containment policy, which the national government would apply until the early 1960s. The main notion behind containment was that the nation's safety, as well as the capital's urban and social renewal, required stopping new growth in the Paris region. The doctrine's practical translation was the creation of a regional planning agency, the Comité supérieur de

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[23] Rosemary Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 55-57, 189-191.

[24] Bruno Marnot, "Les politiques d'aménagement du territoire sous la IIIe République," (Université Michel Montaigne-Bordeaux 3, 2002), 9, 13-14; Desportes and Picon, *De l'Espace au territoire*, 127-135; Christophe Bouneau, "La contribution de l'électrification à la genèse de l'aménagement du territoire en France durant la première moitié du 20e siècle," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002).

[25] Shanny Peer observes: "Many French political and business leaders...interpret[ed] the economic crisis as a warning against overindustrialization and a vindication of the more moderate, balanced growth which had characterized the French economy." Peer, *France on Display*, 12.

[26] Desportes and Picon, *De l'Espace au territoire*, 11, 132-134. In the words of the late geographer Marcel Roncayolo, "Paris n'a pas à conquérir la province pour l'épuiser. Il devient, d'une manière de plus en plus ouverte, le seul foyer capable d'en générer les flux et les incertitudes." Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 602-603.

[27] Isabelle Couzon, "La place de la ville dans le discours des aménageurs du début des années 1920 à la fin des années 1960," *Cybergeo* (1997).

l'aménagement et de l'organisation générale de la région parisienne (CSAOGRP), which began work in 1928 and was quickly placed under the authority of the central government.[28]

Industry was the CSAOGRP's first target. Politicians in the capital's *beaux quartiers* had long seen urban manufacturing as a source of blight. Besides fueling demographic growth and urban congestion in general, large Fordist factories sprawled across valuable land and clogged up the city's streets and waterways. Citroën's main assembly line sat just southwest of the Eiffel Tower, in the fifteenth arrondissement, while an army of trucks and ships connected it to two dozen other production sites in the suburbs in a constant to-and-fro of parts and products.[29] Citroën was far from the only Taylorist factory in the City of Light. The automaker Panhard and the aircraft firm SNECMA also had major plants *intra muros*; Renault had the largest factory in France just west of Paris' gates, in Boulogne-Billancourt.[30] The constant reduction of green space, the growing importance of tourism, and the need to create new space for more elite activities were all charges in the case against urban factories.[31]

Targeting industry had an explicit class bias. After the 1920s, the Paris region's Fordist factories, blue-collar neighborhoods, and new "red belt" suburbs were the epicenter of labor radicalism and Communist politics in France, increasingly taking over the lead from France's northeast coalfields and steel towns. The Parisian "métallo" served as the emblem of what Gerard Noiriel calls the "singular generation" of the French working class. This was a generation of workers who forged a strong class consciousness in the struggles of the Popular Front, the Resistance, and the Liberation, and who often voted for the Communist Party and the CGT union. This generation was also singular by its urban concentration, which contrasted with the rural industrialization of the nineteenth

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[28] Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 13-25; Rosemary Wakeman, "Nostalgic Modernism and the Invention of Paris in the Twentieth Century," *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 124-125.

[29] Matthieu Flonneau, "Paris et l'ombre de Detroit. L'automobile de masse, ses usines et la ville," in *L'Usine dans l'espace francilien*, ed. Martine Tabeaud, Richard Conte, and Yann Toma (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001), 25.

[30] Jean Bastié, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris: Paris de 1945 à 2000* (Paris: Hachette, 2000), 157.

[31] The spread of factories in the capital and its region was seen as an ugly stain on picturesque sites with tourist potential—both green space for local consumption and sites for outside tourists—and locals had long complained about industrial pollution in the City of Light. Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 17-18; Efi Markou, "Paris et les usines (1900-1919). De la décentralisation de la capitale à l'aménagement de son agglomération," in *Villes en crise? Les politiques municipales face aux pathologies urbaines (fin XVIIIe – fin XXe siècle)*, ed. Marec Yannick (Paris: CREAPHIS, 2005).

century and the decentralized industry of the 1950s and 1960s.[32] The municipal elections of 1924, which brought Socialists and Communists to power in a number of the capital's working-class suburbs, gave birth to the notion that Paris was encircled by a revolutionary proletariat.[33] The Communist Party continued to gain ground over the next fifteen years, claiming a whopping 40 percent of votes in the Seine department during the legislative elections of 1936.[34]

The CSAOGRP's secretary, Henry Puget, put the planners' obsession with the red belt plainly: "Multitudes of communists have surrounded Paris with the famous red belt, and, more fearsome than the French realize, bands of foreign proletarians in the shallows of the suburbs are forming an army ready to riot."[35] In 1929, André de Fels, the centrist MP charged with crafting the CSAOGRP's general plan for the National Assembly, expounded on the need to "break" the red belt. Yet another member of the planning board argued that the "social danger" created by this working-class concentration justified using existing legislation that forbade dangerous industries in city centers.[36]

Planners blamed poor housing and urban segregation for working-class radicalism. A rapid influx of migrants drove population density in Paris to incredible levels—higher even than in New York and London—and new arrivals were often stuck in dilapidated and overcrowded apartments, or simply left homeless.[37] Physical and social barriers cut dilapidated working-class neighborhoods off from the capital's social elites.[38] Reformers were even more concerned with Paris' suburbs, which quickly became the new working-class slum. In an idiosyncratic brand of urban expansion, 1.5 million people moved out of Paris proper to unplanned housing developments that often lacked basic urban amenities like roads and drains. Communist and Socialist

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[32] Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française*, 195-209.
[33] Bernard Marchand, *Les Ennemis de Paris: La haine de la grande ville, des lumières à nos jours* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009), 114.
[34] Jean-Luc Pinol and Maurice Garden, eds., *Atlas des Parisiens de la Révolution à nos jours* (Paris: Parigramme, 2009), 117-119. For an English summary, see Tyler Stovall, "From Red Belt to Black Belt: Race, Class, and Urban Marginality in Twentieth-Century Paris," in *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France*, ed. Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall (Raleigh: Duke University Press, 2003).
[35] Cited in Wakeman, "Nostalgic Modernism," 126.
[36] De Fels was a *député* of the Seine-et-Oise department, and belonged to the centrist (and misleadingly titled) party Gauche radicale. CSAOGRP, minutes of 2 December 1929 and 26 March 1930, CHAN F2/2714.
[37] Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 45-47; Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française*, 147-149.
[38] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 43-50.

municipalities gained votes by fighting to improve the situation of new blue-collar homeowners, making poor urbanism directly responsible for the Left's advance.[39] This mix of old and new proletarian neighborhoods, each segregated by class and marked by dilapidated housing, stoked the fear of government planners.[40]

The latter couched their elite bias in the issue of urban congestion's public cost. The influx of population to the Paris region required the constant construction of housing and infrastructure—which had to be built on France's most expensive real estate—even as thinly populated rural regions had schools, homes, and public services in excess.[41] The CSAOGRP argued that cutting off industrial growth was the only way to prevent urban development from becoming a Sisyphean task. Paris needed huge investments, but urban improvements would only make it a more attractive place to live and produce, thus provoking further industrial and demographic growth.[42]

Moreover, caring for Paris' menacing proletariat imposed particularly large public outlays on unemployment relief and social assistance, which decentralized industry generally kept in the private realm of the farm, the family, and company paternalism. In 1950, the government's *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* complained about "[l]es dépenses d'assistance qu'entraîne l'entassement d'une trop nombreuse population de condition sociale modeste, souvent déracinée de la campagne."[43] Above all, renovating the Paris region's blue-collar neighborhoods—which most planners saw as an urgent social and political priority—would cost a fortune. Gabriel Dessus, the leader of the Vichy studies, worked under the assumption that renovation would eventually need to displace some 2.5 million people, allowing a "'nettoyage' comportant la suppression

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[39] Annie Fourcaut, *La Banlieue en morceaux: La crise des lotissements défectueux en France dans l'entre-deux-guerres* (Grâne: Créaphis, 2000), 170-173, 316-317.

[40] In the words of Annie Fourcaut, this new red belt around Paris symbolized for reformers, "le double visage terrifiant du peuple: miséreux et marginaux, mais aussi classe ouvrière organisée autour de ses bastions, municipalités et grandes usines, en vue d'une révolution sociale et politique." Annie Fourcaut, "Banlieue rouge, au-delà du mythe politique," in *Banlieue rouge, 1920-1960: Années Thorez, années Gabin, archétype du populaire, banc d'essai des modernités*, ed. Annie Fourcaut (Paris: Autrement, 1992), 30.

[41] The MRU wrote: "Alors que l'équipement des grandes agglomérations...est constamment en retard sur les besoins, et coûte de plus en plus cher, il y a au contraire, dans les zones de dépeuplement, tout un capital inutilisé." Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national d'aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950), 10. See also Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 157-195.

[42] Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 17.

[43] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national*, 8-9.

d'une part notable des habitations ouvrières."[44] Dessus declared that it would be cheaper to simply decentralize the whole working-class suburb of Saint-Denis—with all its factories and inhabitants—than to redevelop it on the same site.[45]

In this context, displacing Parisian factories and workers could appear as a matter of sound public finances. Gravier argued that planners should organize production and population across the French territory according to a marginal-cost logic—in the same way that a "propriétaire foncier" organized his land according to the most profitable uses. Gravier's comment captures the explicit assumption behind two generations of Paris region planning that some people belonged in a capital city, some people did not, and that it was the state's responsibility to weed out the latter.[46]

All government programs from the 1920s forward contained plans to displace manufacturing and blue-collar workers out of the center of the Paris region, but under the Third Republic this goal ran into limits that would only be surmounted after the war. Plans for blocking all new factory construction in the Paris region and decentralizing industry to the provinces, initially advocated by some members of the CSAOGRP, were withdrawn in the face of severe resistance. Manufacturers joined up with pro-growth mayors to fight construction limits. The pro-business Conseil d'État gave a boost to these efforts by ruling against state *dirigisme*. Even within the CSAOGRP there were doubts about whether administrative fiat could check the seemingly irresistible concentration of French industry in the capital. In the end, the Committee opted for a regional solution, recommending the deconcentration of manufacturing to planned industrial parks in the capital's suburbs. This solution was more amenable to employers and workers, but it too remained a moot issue, given the weakness of interwar planners.[47]

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[44] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 52. See also Pierre George, "Le problème du logement et la décentralisation industrielle," 1944, in Délégation générale à l'équipement national, ed., *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1944). Hereafter cited as DGEN, *Rapports et travaux*.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 401.
[47] Efi Markou, "La décentralisation des industries parisiennes. Figures d'acteurs (1928-1940)," in *La ville sans bornes, la ville et ses bornes*, ed. Danièle Fraboulet and Dominique Rivière (Paris Nolin, 2006), 189-196; CNPF, "Le point de vue des industriels dans l'aménagement de la région parisienne," *Urbanisme* (March, 1932); Rémi Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne" (doctoral thesis, Ecole d'architecture Paris-Villemin, 1990).

Some manufacturers shared the CSAOGRP's concerns. In particular, the 1936 strikes convinced at least a few employers to move production to the provinces.[48] Nonetheless, these deserters' ranks were more than replenished by new growth, and many interwar projects became bogged down in inaction. The case of Louis Renault is instructive. The conservative automaker first became interested in decentralization in 1932, after visiting the garden cities of Raoul Dautry, a member of the CSAOGRP and an emblematic social engineer of the Third Republic.[49] Renault refused such Fordist benefits as the "five-dollar day" and paid vacations, but as historian Jean-Louis Loubet writes,

> [Il] voit volontiers ses ouvriers s'oxygénant sur des stades grâce à des associations sportives, vivant dans des cités-jardins ouvertes sur la verdure, s'occupant à cultiver des jardins-ouvriers. Un éloignement de la vie urbaine, en somme, qui entrevoit un retour partiel vers la terre, une vie et une animation plus saines, un retour aussi de la femme au foyer.[50]

The strikes of 1936 convinced Renault to take a second look at Dautry's garden cities. He also ordered his nephew and advisor, François Lehideux, to draw up a concrete plan for decentralizing production. The cost of such a program, however, ensured that Renault's fantasy of fleeing urban militancy remained on the drawing board. In fact, the automaker put up some of the most vigorous resistance to government orders to decentralize production in the buildup to World War II. If this was the face of reform, determined decentralization was a long way off.[51]

In the end, it took the imminent threat of war to get practical measures passed for decentralization. Here too, government initiatives started early but became bogged down in business as usual. Some military production had already been decentralized from northeastern France in 1870 and again during World War I.[52] The latter underscored the

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[48] For example, the president of the SIFA foundry, in the conference of the Centre des jeunes patrons (CJP), "Centralisation et décentralisation industrielles," April 1943, CAC 19770777/2; Jean Delvert, "Les Questions de la main-d'œuvre et la décentralisation industrielle. La leçon des récentes tentatives (1920-1940)," 11, CAC 19770777/2.

[49] Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne," 94; Remi Baudouï, *Raoul Dautry, 1880-1951: Le technocrate de la République* (Balland, 1992), 253.

[50] Jean-Louis Loubet, *Renault: Histoire d'une entreprise* (Paris: ETAI, 2000), 45.

[51] "La défense nationale, je m'en fous," Renault said in response to an order to decentralize defense production. Jean-Louis Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 179.

[52] Bernard Dézert and Christian Verlaque, *L'Espace industriel* (Paris: Masson, 1978), 150; Pierre Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle de la région parisienne: Bilan et aspects (1950-1964)" (doctoral thesis, Université Paris 10, 1969), 150.

dangers of concentrated production, since the front line cut off much of France's northeast industrial heartland for the duration of the war. As soon as the war ended, however, generous state funding was pumped into rebuilding the northeast's industrial potential, and it was immediately clear that the defense-funded buildup of Parisian industry now made the capital a prime target in the era of aerial bombardments.[53] By the 1920s, military experts thus called on the government to begin a planned decentralization of manufacturing. They exchanged ideas with the planners at the CSAOGRP, and the idea gathered political momentum.[54]

In 1934, the main ministries responsible for issuing defense contracts signed a decree refusing to do business with companies that moved production to the Paris region. But decentralization once again ran into powerful opposition. A mix of company resistance, the defense of business interests by ministerial officials, and infighting about who should pay for moving production suspended practical action.[55] In 1938, the government turned to administrative constraint—requiring all defense contractors to obtain prior government authorization for new factory construction—but even then the Finance Ministry successfully gutted the measure of its sanctions.[56] Much action was thus delayed until after the war's outbreak. In October 1939—more than a month after France's entry into the war—Raoul Dautry, now minister of Armament, signed an expanded program of decentralized expansion. Seven months later, during the German advances of May and June 1940, the government finally ordered "le transfert de toute l'infrastructure industrielle pouvant permettre d'envisager la poursuite de la guerre."[57] Manufacturers made a helter-skelter effort to flee south with their equipment and

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[53] Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State*, 31, 69-71; Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 134-136; Jacques Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation de la banlieue parisienne," in *Ouvriers en banlieue, XIXe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jacques Girault (Paris: Editions de l'Atelier, 1998), 99-100.
[54] On the decentralization of war industries, see Efi Markou, "Military Thinking and the Urban Question: Industrial Decentralization in France between the Wars," in *Endangered Cities. Military Power and Urban Societies in the Era of the World Wars*, ed. Marcus Funck and Roger Chickering (Boston: Brill, 2004).
[55] Even laissez-faire conservatives in parliament railed against the slow progress on decentralization and company resistance, helping create the conditions for new state interventions in 1936. The Air minister between 1934-1935, Victor Denain, was even accused of undermining the decentralization policy. Herrick Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism in the French Aircraft Industry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 38, 42; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 48.
[56] Cited in Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 57.
[57] Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne," 88.

workers, but the armistice was signed and refugees ordered home before most barges and trains reached their destination.[58]

In the end, the only defense sector that did much decentralization in the 1930s was the aircraft industry. The French aircraft sector was heavily concentrated in the Paris region, in part because it long resisted the turn to mass production taken in other countries. Companies needed access to the Paris region's skilled labor, inter-firm linkages, and the state administrations that provided contracts. Provincial centers of construction, like Toulouse, benefited from aircraft decentralization during World War I but lost production after war's end.[59] Preparation of the industry for a second conflict reversed this trend. Over the course of the 1930s—and especially after 1936—the aircraft industry rapidly expanded its provincial production. By June 1940, eighty percent of production was located in the provinces, making aviation one of the few defense sectors that kept working during the German invasion.[60]

The reason for this relative success was clear: exceptional state intervention. In 1928, the government created an Air Ministry to concentrate and modernize the sector. The Air Ministry initially tried to earn manufacturers' cooperation with the argument of cheaper provincial labor and new government subsidies, doled out by a special decentralization fund created in 1931. Results remained modest.[61] In 1936-37, the Popular Front government fundamentally changed the game by nationalizing most airframe production (it mainly left research and engine construction in private hands). Now ministry officials had the power to directly order firms to decentralize. They also had more power to fund new provincial plants, thanks to a budget that skyrocketed in the buildup for war. To facilitate decentralization, the ministry organized France's six new nationalized companies around regional production networks, each of which connected Parisian plants with factories in a provincial region.[62]

Finally, labor politics came to play an important role in the decentralization dynamic, for two reasons. First of all, as the aircraft workforce swelled from 58,265 in 1938 to 250,000 in June 1940, companies desperately needed provincial labor to fill their

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[58] Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 178-181.
[59] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 24, 46.
[60] Ibid., 223.
[61] Ibid., 24-25; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 36.
[62] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 106.

rosters.[63] Secondly, the industry's particular history of labor struggles widened the gap between wages in Paris and the provinces, making cheaper provincial labor ever more attractive for manufacturers. After 1936, in effect, the capital's aircraft workers emerged as the vanguard of the French working class, and soon won some of the best pay scales in the nation. The sector's Parisian wages soared to twice the rate of the worst-paid provincial locations where new aircraft factories were being created.[64] Such stark differentials generated a union push for equalization, which culminated in a national contract—the first ever in France—in 1938. This was a short-lived gain, however, as government and business leaders repealed the contract within the year.[65] The repeal forced provincial workers back into their regional metalworking contracts, which had lower pay scales and gave employers greater flexibility to determine workplace conditions.[66]

With the regional wage gap safely restored, a direct ministerial order to decentralize, and massive government funding to open provincial plants, the aircraft industry achieved a tremendous expansion of production in the provinces. As such, it provided interwar France's main experiment with industrial decentralization. Besides its speed and magnitude, the process of aircraft decentralization held a particular interest for administration experts. In terms of geography, first of all, defense imperatives created a regionally equalizing logic. Ministerial officials pushed companies to France's more rural center, south, and west, and tried to disperse new factories from cities to the countryside.[67] This effort included both a rapid build-up of existing aircraft towns, such as Bordeaux, Bourges, and Toulouse, and the creation of entirely new industrial centers in smaller towns.[68] Officials even created a novel regional production network north of

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[63] Ibid., 161-165, 176-185.

[64] In impressive victories between 1936 and 1938, they had won vanguard collective contracts, which set aircraft wages higher than comparable jobs in other metalworking sectors (25 percent higher in 1938). Ibid., 1, 10-11, 305-306, 315-316.

[65] The national contract required provincial wages to be set relatively close to rates in the Paris region (between 82 and 88 percent depending on the locality). Ibid., 181-188.

[66] Ibid., 187-188, 206.

[67] Indeed, the Air Ministry's "decentralization line" beyond which companies needed to settle reproduced the historic division between the "two Frances," running from Normandy down to the Rhone valley in the southeast. Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 46.

[68] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 119-120; Guy Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques et spatiales en France* (Toulouse: Privat, 1974), 247-251, 318-333. Emmanuel Chadeau, *De Blériot à Dassault: Histoire de l'industrie aéronautique en France, 1900-1950* (Paris: Fayard, 1987), 318,

the Pyrenees, setting up airframe, engine, and accessories operations in the towns of Tarbes and Pau and tiny centers like Bidos or Aire-sur-l'Adour.[69] As a social and industrial experiment, meanwhile, aircraft decentralization provided all the variables government experts hoped to test. Manufacturers transferred Parisian factories and workers, but also hired tens of thousands of provincials, many of whom had no industrial experience.

Above all, though, the aircraft experience was a rare silver lining on the Third Republic's failure to promote industrial decentralization. The growing clamor that France's regional polarization was not only an urban and economic problem, but also a direct menace to the nation—undermining France's particular social balance, fueling working-class radicalism, and even undermining national defense—had not produced much meaningful change. Business interests, weak provincial concern for new growth, and a splintered administration all limited decentralization. After 1940, the new experts at Vichy took up the Third Republic's frustration with regional imbalance and vowed to push through the ambitious decentralization that the parliamentary regime had been unable to realize.

2. Parisians into Peasants

On March 3, 1942, an allied bombing targeted the Renault car factories in Boulogne-Billancourt. The President of the Administrative Commission of the Seine, M. Bernard, fumed that the Conseil général had repeatedly demanded the decentralization of Paris' major factories, which would have avoided the March 1942 "massacres." Bernard demanded immediate action. He also insisted that this defense issue be used for a reactionary political project: "bris[er] le cercle de cette 'zone rouge' où le communisme a exercé tant de ravages et où le rassemblement d'énormes masses ouvrières maintient toujours un danger possible d'agitation."[70] The Prefect of the Seine echoed these

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327. A good map of all new creations is provided by Bohn in "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 3 (DGEN 1944), 11. A map of decentralization plants that survived the war can be found in Jalabert, 240; Chadeau has a map of all aeronautics sites, but without names attached, on 446.

[69] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 289-290.

[70] Bernard, président de la Commission administrative de la Seine, to prefect of Seine, 12 March 1942, CHAN F 60/379.

sentiments, declaring "l'inopportunité de maintenir à Paris des industries groupant chacune plusieurs dizaines de milliers d'ouvriers."[71]

In response to the bombings, Philippe Pétain ordered Vichy's new planning service, the Délégation générale à l'Équipement national (DGEN), to prepare "une politique de large déconcentration et de décentralisation industrielle."[72] The Vichy regime gave a green light to utopias of reducing blue-collar Paris and kicking workers back into the countryside. These goals fit easily within the ideological framework of the National Revolution, which turned the exaltation of peasants, regions, and rural balance into an anti-Republican argument for authoritarian social engineering.[73] But in doing so, it also forced planners to confront the numerous obstacles to physically transferring Parisian plants and workers into a garden setting.

The government instructed the DGEN to take a broad view of industrial decentralization, "du point de vue de l'urbanisme, de l'hygiène et de la politique sociale."[74] A team of young academics, administrators, and members of government-friendly research institutes thus set out to conduct a broad range of studies.[75] Their effort was similar to Britain's contemporary study commission on "The Geographic Distribution of the Industrial Population," although Vichy's experts kept their initiative private and mainly restricted their consultation to trustworthy business contacts.[76] Nonetheless, by war's end the DGEN team was ready to publish its findings in a nine-volume series.[77] In the words of Pierre Randet, the longstanding postwar director of regional development, the Dessus studies constituted the "epitome" of French knowledge

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[71] Prefect of Seine to Darlan, 17 March 1942, CHAN F 60/379.
[72] Laval to DGEN, 18 May 1943, CHAN F 60/379; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 11.
[73] Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars over Cultural Identity, 1900-1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 8-10.
[74] Laval to DGEN, 18 May 1943, CHAN F 60/379.
[75] Olivier Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours et d'un milieu aménageur des années trente aux années cinquante," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 69.
[76] Commission centrale d'étude pour le Plan d'aménagement national, minutes of 20 April 1950, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 2.9. On the Barlow Commission, see Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning*, 55-59.
[77] Délégation générale à l'équipement national, ed., *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels*, 9 vols. (Paris, 1944-1945). A shorter version was published as Gabriel Dessus, ed., *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949).

on industrial location.[78] The DGEN's findings proved all the more influential after the war since a number its experts went on to become leading figures of postwar regional policy, as did certain interwar planners.[79]

Like other Vichy planning efforts, the industrial location studies provided a space where authoritarian ruralism and utopian reformism mixed freely with pragmatic economic studies.[80] The original leaders of the studies were both pragmatic businessmen who maintained a certain skepticism for Vichy's most reactionary rhetoric, but who nonetheless embraced an agrarian framework and the ambition of broad social engineering. The early head of the DGEN was François Lehideux, who brought to Vichy the ideal of "la création autour de nos plus grandes villes de cités satellites campagnardes."[81] Gabriel Dessus, who actually directed the industrial location studies, was the director of the Compagnie parisienne de distribution d'électricité. Dessus was a practical counterweight to more authoritarian voices, like Gravier, but he left no doubt about the conservative origins of the DGEN's thinking. The studies, he told a conference in 1953, were rooted in 1930s writings on "les villes tentaculaires, la ceinture rouge de Paris, etc."[82]

Dessus' crew set out to compare and integrate city and countryside, understood as "deux civilisations différentes."[83] Dozens of studies tried to detect the impact of rural versus urban living on everything from workers' health and birth rates to morality and religion, unionism and class sentiment, and the possibility of creating "[de] nouveaux types sociaux" through the corporatist interaction of bourgeois, workers, and rurals in

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[78] Pierre Randet, "Premières conclusions de principe en matière de localisation de l'industrie," presentation to the Commission centrale d'étude pour le Plan d'aménagement national, 9 November 1950, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 2.9

[79] Couzon, "La Place de la ville."

[80] Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State*, 149-156; Philip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 90-101.

[81] Cited in Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours," 68. Lehideux was soon replaced by Henri Giraud, who himself soon died, leaving the DGEN to Frédéric Surleau. See Lehideux's notes # 4 and #7 in CAC 19770777/1.

[82] Dessus in "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," *L'Économie rurale* (April, 1953): 3. Indeed, the starting point of the Dessus studies were the "deplorable" state of worker housing and the fact that in "Tous les centres industriels importants de France...les habitations des travailleurs sont concentrées des quartiers uniquement ouvriers, où se développe et s'accuse la conscience d'être une 'classe séparée.'" Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 90.

[83] Dessus, "Introduction à l'étude de la localisation de l'industrie," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 1 (DGEN 1944), 5. See also George Friedmann in Dessus, ed., *Matériaux*, IX-XI.

small communities.[84] Pastoral and hygienist myths about the ills of the big city and the benefits of rural living were front and center in their initial thinking.[85] The DGEN inherited interwar assumptions that the Paris region's blue-collar suburbs reduced birth rates and propagated disease; more broadly, they saw the big city as a source of unnatural fatigue, social anomie, and even a "tourbillon endiablé d'excitations."[86] In short, as Dessus later said, "il nous paraissait évident que l'atmosphère des villes est empoisonnée. On l'a dit, redit, et on a largement vanté les vertus de l'air de la campagne."[87]

The Vichy experts had a range of ideological trajectories after the war. The geographer Pierre George was an interwar Communist who became one of the most prominent specialists in his field after the war. Under Vichy, however, he put his talent for statistics to a less progressive use: mapping out the geography of France's rural army of reserve labor.[88] The conservative wing of the studies was downright reactionary. It was represented by two men who did not actually work for Dessus but were consulted for their expert status: Roland Ziegel and Jean-François Gravier. Ziegel was a maritime engineer who had worked on decentralizing unemployed Parisians in the 1930s and participated in the technocratic think-tank X-Crise.[89] Gravier, as we have seen was a right-wing corporatist who became a propagandist for the National Revolution, openly defending an authoritarian state and denouncing the Republic.[90]

Ziegel summed up his reactionary social project in 1935: decentralization aimed to achieve, "un état où le travailleur…est suffisamment satisfait de son sort pour rester dans la même entreprise, ne pas désirer un bouleversement social, et procréer des enfants sans restriction."[91] In this quest for labor control and procreation, Paris was the nemesis

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[84] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 66, 71. "[N]os ambitions étaient...sans limites," Dessus later said. In "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," 3.
[85] Peer, *France on Display*, 103.
[86] Cited in Georges Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle" (doctoral thesis, 1953), chapter 5. Dessus spoke of "l'énervement de la vie urbaine" Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 50.
[87] Dessus in "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," 6.
[88] Pierre George, "Etude statistique de la répartition des travailleurs industriels en France en 1931," in *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels, vol. 2*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Délégation générale à l'équipement national, 1944).
[89] Markou, "Military Thinking and the Urban Question," 43; Clarke, "Imagined Productive Communities," 353-354.
[90] Olivier Dard, "Jean-François Gravier: Un aménageur dans le siècle," in *Aménageurs, territoires et entreprises en Europe du Nord-Ouest au second XXe siècle*, ed. Olivier Dard and Jean-François Eck (Metz: Centre régional universitaire lorrain d'histoire, 2010), 23.
[91] Ziegel, "Dissémination de l'industrie française," CAC 19770777/2.

and rural dissemination the ideal state. The ultimate goal of decentralization, Gravier told Dessus, was to "faire de l'ouvrier des villes...un 'paysan.'" Drawing on the trope that milieu influenced mentality, Gravier explained that city and countryside produced "deux habitus," "deux séries de moeurs" that were "absolument différentes" in all respects. If done right, decentralization could thus turn the urban worker's habitus rural again.[92]

For Ziegel and Gravier, decentralization was not just one social policy among others—it was the only way to eliminate a dangerous urban proletariat. As Gravier explained, all attempts at social reform, from the Left's municipal socialism to Vichy's corporatist reform of the workplace, had failed to "dissoudre le bloc prolétarien." The reason was simple: radicalism was a geographic problem, of blue-collar concentration and "isolement géographique" in segregated neighborhoods. Indeed, Gravier did not hesitate to write in August 1944 that a drab industrial suburb like Saint-Ouen was "une sorte de camp de concentration." A geographic problem called for a geographic solution. Only dispersing workers in rural communities could foster their identification with groups other than the working class.[93] Never one for understatement, Gravier insisted that decentralization had become as important "pour la défense intérieure d'une nation que pour sa défense militaire."[94]

Unfortunately for these agrarian conservatives, the DGEN studies did more to undermine ideals of displacing Parisian workers than to validate them. The Vichy experts discovered that besides offering high wages for workers and an unbeatable economic environment for manufacturers, the Paris region actually provided blue-collar populations with relatively good housing, transportation, and urban amenities as compared to the provinces. These findings were a blow to hygienist myths. Detailed studies on everything from the dilapidated state of provincial homes to national maps of common diseases and medical studies of workers' commutes showed that even Paris'

[92] Gravier, "Les Justifications humaines de la décentralisation industrielle et ses modalités," August 1944, MRU CAC 19770777/3.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.

emblematic slums and congested subways could not rival with the poverty of provincial housing and transportation.[95]

Even more importantly, the DGEN's work underscored a core economic dilemma in Vichy's decentralization ideal: no worker would leave Paris for worse conditions in the provinces, but no company would offer employees the Parisian wages or good housing that could entice them out of the capital. Physically transplanting factories and employees was already difficult to justify as an urban and social project, but in economic terms it was sheer nonsense.

The aircraft industry was a case in point. Guy Bohn, an expert in the government's Comité d'organisation des industries aéronautique who observed aircraft decentralization for the DGEN, put the matter bluntly: "l'émigration de l'ouvrier parisien ne constitua pratiquement pas un appoint sérieux" for decentralized aircraft factories.[96] Even after they trimmed back their ambitions, aircraft manufacturers struggled to transfer the indispensable cadre of managers, engineers, and skilled workers needed to get their new factories up and running. Employees who accepted to make the move were thus in a position to extract fantastic concessions, inflating the cost of moving a Parisian worker to unsustainable levels.[97] "Ainsi," Dessus explained in a conference in 1943, "l'Aéronautique a été amenée, pour arriver à envoyer ses ouvriers à Châteauroux et ailleurs, à leur donner assez souvent le salaire de Paris plus une indemnité de dépaysement, plus un logement à Châteauroux. Il est évident que dans ces conditions-là, l'équilibre d'une industrie qui ne serait pas basée sur le paiement final par l'État d'un avion à son prix de revient ne serait pas concevable."[98]

Even such benefits could not convince most Parisian workers to decentralize. The new nationalized company Société Nationale de Constructions Aéronautiques du Centre (SNCAC) found this out when it tried to close its Billancourt factory and transfer its several hundred employees to the provincial town of Bourges. Eighty percent of invited

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[95] Pierre George note # 181 in CAC 19770777/1.

[96] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique." Guy Bohn was the Chef de service juridique du Comité d'organisation des industries aéronautique. See Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 60, 112.

[97] Bohn wrote that this inflation created "des surprises considérables" among firms. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 23.

[98] Dessus, "La décentralisation des entreprises," conference at the ESOP, 9 December 1943, 14-15, CAC 19770777/3.

workers refused, despite the SNCAC's efforts to butter them up with a full year's extra pay and the threat of unemployment if they stayed behind. Engineers and managers were more willing to follow the company, but over half still refused.[99] Many employees who did head south moved back to the capital after a short period, especially when the wartime placement of civilian workers (*l'affectation spéciale*) ended.[100]

Workers' resistance to leaving the capital surprised the Dessus team. Their reformist assumption was that the provinces offered better living conditions than the expensive and overcrowded neighborhoods of blue-collar Paris. But the Vichy studies challenged this belief in terms of wages, housing and urban amenities, and labor power. It was no mystery that Paris boasted the best industrial wages in France. Indeed, many elite reformers saw high pay as the only imaginable explanation for workers' attachment to the capital. However, proponents of decentralization long maintained that these nominally higher wages were an illusion. Due to differentials in the cost of living, this reasoning went, a provincial worker actually had more buying power than his Parisian counterpart.[101] A social worker at the Caisse de compensation de la Région Parisienne, which distributed family allowances, told Dessus, "les classes ouvrières ignorent la réalité des budgets et se laissent prendre au mirage du salaire nominal."[102]

The Dessus studies showed that in fact workers were right: the regional wage gap was real, not just nominal, and it was often substantial. The magnitude of nominal disparities itself stunned government experts. With Parisian pay scales sometimes doubling those in the provinces, the aircraft industry exemplified the problem, but it was far from an isolated case. In 1938, a Paris mason could expect to earn between 55 percent and 81 percent more than his provincial counterpart; in the textiles industry, some areas had rates 46-48 percent below those in the capital.[103] When the Vichy government

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[99] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 120. Bohn found that specialized engineers and cadres were the most geographically mobile, while technicians and line supervisors fell somewhere in between. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 13, 21-22, 27-28.
[100] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 21.
[101] Ziegel claimed that a rural worker could be paid 20 percent less than his Parisian counterpart and still make out better. Roland Ziegel, "Une tâche nationale: la dissémination de l'industrie française," *Bulletin du Centre polytechnicien d'études économiques* (January-February, 1935): 26-27.
[102] Interview notes with Mme Dissard, 29 March 1943, CAC 19770777/2.
[103] In fact, the category is for menuisiers, maçons, and vitriers. Alain Bayet, "L'accroissement spectaculaire des salaires et leur pouvoir d'achat," in *Le travail en France, 1800-2000*, ed. Olivier Marchand, Claude Thélot, and Alain Bayet (Paris: Nathan, 1997), 168.

introduced salary controls after 1940, the grill for metalworking industries still consecrated a forty percent difference between Paris and the smallest provincial towns. Efforts to apply this official pay scale only further dampened aircraft decentralization, sending some of the Parisian workers who had made the move packing for the capital.[104]

By comparison with these large wage gaps, differences in cost of living were minor. Whether in rural areas such as the department of Oise, traditional manufacturing regions like the textiles town of Elbeuf, or at the modern Peugeot car factories in Sochaux, provincial workers made out worse than their Parisian counterparts.[105] A survey of prefects and companies that had recently decentralized confirmed this conclusion.[106] The Dessus team briefly entertained another way of posing the problem: perhaps urban workers could simply take up the subsistence consumption habits of rural France, and thus work for less. Food and clothing purchases could be reduced. Fishing and gardening would replace the bars and jazz music that weighed down the Parisian worker's budget. But this hope of a return to subsistence living was a dud. Lucien Flaus, who did the wage studies, concluded that decentralized Parisians conserved their urban tastes, and demanded the pay to match. Contravening Gravier's claim that a rural milieu would create a rural habitus, it seemed that the "retour de travailleurs urbains à la vie 'semi-rurale'" was impossible.[107] There was no way around it: France had stark wage disparities, which made it impossible for Parisians to accept provincial wages. For the same reason, decentralizing workers at their current pay rates would be a "véritable 'catastrophe' économique" for firms, as a 1945 note put it.[108]

The problem was only exacerbated by the poor housing and living conditions in the provinces, which gave the DGEN team its biggest surprise. It turned out that the

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[104] As Bohn wrote, "la région parisienne maintenait, par ses conventions, son hégémonie" over France's aircraft workforce, and even after the official blockage of salaries, wages in the Paris region continued to climb. The Société Turboméga lost "de bons éléments qui ont regagné la région parisienne" in 1943, after the government's new salary grill in metalworking consecrated a 40 percent difference between the capital and Bordes. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 23-26.

[105] Leaving the capital entailed a "réduction très sensible du pouvoir d'achat." Lucien Flaus, "Etude comparative des salaires de l'industrie et du coût de la vie dans la région parisienne et dans le département de l'Oise," in *Rapports et travaux*, vol. 3 (DGEN 1944).

[106] Roussel of Fondation Carrel, note # 107, 1945, CAC 19770777/3.

[107] Flaus, "Analyse d'un budget d'ouvrier parisien" and "Incidence du changement du genre de vie sur la structure du budget," 1943, and Roussel of Fondation Carrel, summary of geographic salary disparities, 1945, doc. 107, CAC 19770777/3; Dissard, "Enquête sur la décentralisation de l'habitat ouvrier," 1943, CAC 19770777/2.

[108] Roussel of Fondation Carrel, note # 107, 1945, CAC 19770777/3.

housing crisis was a national, not just a Parisian, problem. All industrial cities had similar rates of slum dwellings, and non-industrial towns were not far behind. Rapid industrialization made the problem infinitely worse. In the aircraft experience, decentralized workers overwhelmed local housing stocks and became easy targets for unscrupulous renters, who let out insalubrious shanties for outrageous prices ("que toutes les lois sur les loyers n'ont pu contenir à un juste taux," as Bohn put it). Illness skyrocketed. An examination of tuberculosis found that just over 1 percent of aircraft workers had the disease in Paris, versus 14 percent in the town of Pau. Aircraft companies themselves stuffed workers into overcrowded dormitories and hastily divided apartments.[109]

Manufacturers also set up bus lines to ship employees in from distant farms, but Dessus thought these long commutes were an even bigger problem than poor housing itself. Many an aircraft worker spent so much time biking or busing to work that he ended up consecrating "la totalité de son existence à travailler et à se rendre à son travail." This was a direct rebuttal to the idea that small-town living would absolve workers of their increasingly grinding commutes in Paris' public transportation.[110] In 1942, aircraft manufacturers finally began construction of new company housing, but the DGEN team concluded that this solution presented its own dangers. Although it could be built closer to the factory and had modern comforts, collective housing often alienated workers as much as employers, and such a concentration of labor was a sure foyer of radicalism.[111] The aircraft industry's rush south was a particular event, but it provided a clear lesson for the Dessus team: decentralization had a clear potential to create even

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[109] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 24; Gabriel Dessus, "Introduction à l'étude de la localisation de l'industrie," in *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels, vol. 1*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Délégation générale à l'équipement national, 1944), 24.

[110] Like the growing wage gap, the provincial housing problem drove some workers who had attempted decentralization back to Paris. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 31; Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 24. A 1935 experiment with reconverting unemployed workers in decentralized plants brought a similar finding. At the outset, the hope of better housing and living conditions was a main reason that tempted some workers—especially those with children—to leave the capital. But in practice, a lack of housing meant that only bachelors could be decentralized, and even they scurried back to Paris in droves due to bad living conditions. Even unemployment was not as bad as provincial housing. Pluyette, "L'expérience de l'association des industries métallurgiques," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 3 (DGEN 1944).

[111] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 14-15, 31-43.

worse conditions than in Paris' blue-collar neighborhoods and red belt *lotissements*, fueling the working-class discontent that provincial living was supposed to eradicate.

Moreover, the housing shortage hit manufacturers' bottom line. The aircraft experiment was subsidized by the state, but such important outlays in terms of busing and housing would have driven private companies into the red. Aircraft manufacturers' surprise at these new social responsibilities underscored a key difference in Parisian and provincial business cultures. Large provincial manufacturers, such as Michelin and Peugeot, were well accustomed to paternalist obligations. Given the relatively thin labor markets of provincial regions, these companies had to extend housing and transportation in periods of intense hiring and keep workers on the dole during downturns.[112] In the capital, by contrast, the state and the broader community increasingly assumed responsibility for the social reproduction of labor. Employers could hire and fire with greater ease, rely on an excellent public transportation network to get workers to and from work, and push most housing responsibilities off onto Paris' housing market, which was harsh and expensive but also large and dynamic. As a result, most Parisian industrialists balked at the idea of paying for paternalist commitments and viewed a company town atmosphere as a sure way to poison labor relations.[113] Even Peugeot officials told Dessus to avoid the paternalist model: despite the lower wages of the provinces, they estimated that welfare expenses made the real cost of a worker fifteen percent higher in Sochaux than in the Paris.[114]

Workers' wages, housing, and transportation were the main terms in the economic calculation behind decentralization, but attempts to transplant Parisians also ran aground on the issues of labor power, working-class community, and the urban attractions of the French capital. For Dessus, the aircraft experience showed that "les ouvriers que l'on se

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[112] On company housing in the Paris region, see Susanna Magri and Christian Topalov, "Pratiques ouvrières et changements structurels dans l'espace des grandes villes du premier XXe siècle. Quelques hypothèses de recherche," in *Villes ouvrières, 1900-1950*, ed. Susanna Magri and Christian Topalov (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1990), 28.

[113] Moreover, the widespread distaste for firm paternalism ruled out a government promotion of such a direct dependency between workers and their employer. Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 45. On the continued attraction of the existence of big stocks of housing as a Parisian attraction that hurt industrial decentralization efforts, see: CARP, Séances plénières, minutes of 13 January 1949, CAC 19770911/23. On the other hand, such paternalism did give aircraft companies an opportunity to take back CGT gains in control over social services, it also brought a broad responsibility that weighed down production costs. Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 52, 248.

[114] Parenteau of CEGOS to Dessus, 7 September 1943, CAC 19770777/5.

propose de déplacer physiquement, de prendre à Paris pour les mettre ailleurs…ils résistent parce qu'ils ont leur concierge, leur crémière, ou leur bistro, un certain nombre de choses auxquelles ils tiennent."[115] In fact, the problem went far beyond the neighborhood bistro. For aircraft workers, writes historian Herrick Chapman, "[t]he prospect of a transfer to the provinces felt like an assault on an employee's most basic attachments…[forcing them to] transplant themselves into a region where they will have to change...their customs, mores, and ways of living and eating."[116] For those who did decentralize, the adaptation to provincial culture could be rocky. Maurice Le Mistre, who in the 1930s was a supervisor at a Hanriot plant transplanted to Bourges, told Chapman: "Parisian workers had a different mentality. They enjoyed restaurants and the cinema and were used to paying Paris prices. Provincial workers had gardens and went fishing."[117] Despite the hopes of Vichy reformers, few decentralized employees assimilated into local cultures. Indeed, they often remained divided from fellow workers and residents by culture, consumption, and friendships.[118]

The government's decentralization policy also stoked the ire of Parisian unions. The Fédération des Métaux (FTM) was rooted in the capital's factories, blue-collar neighborhoods, and Communist-run municipalities in the red belt.[119] Unsurprisingly, then, it decried decentralization as an attack on labor, a state-planned layoff of Parisian workers, and an uprooting of, "our comrades...who have bled themselves for all their working lives to buy a patch of land so they can have a modest house built there for their old age."[120] The FTM's fears were well founded. Ziegel explicitly pegged unions as the enemy, rejoicing that decentralization "ne peut que diminuer leur influence," and told fellow reformers to get ready for "une belle bataille" with labor leaders.[121] Here too, however, what began as a reason to transfer Parisian workers quickly became a reason to believe that decentralizing them was practically impossible. Parisian workers in general were reticent about leaving behind the capital's powerful unions. In the DGEN's only

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[115] Dessus, "La décentralisation des entreprises," conference at the ESOP, 9 December 1943, 115, CAC 19770777/3.
[116] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism,* 120.
[117] Ibid., 119-121.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 119-121, 299-300.
[120] Ibid., 112, 120.
[121] Ziegel, "Une tâche nationale."

consultation of labor, Guy Thorel interviewed a handful of sympathetic unionists and reported back that, "[qu'ils soient] syndicalistes ou non, ouvriers et employés urbains sont très attachés à leur syndicats."[122]

Thorel also noticed a basic ideological split that would survive in the early postwar years. Socialists and Communists tended to view decentralization as a way of breaking labor power, but Christian unionists were more receptive to it. In fact, at war's end, Dessus' handful of union collaborators lobbied on behalf of decentralization in the Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens (CFTC). The Christians embraced many of the DGEN's ideals—provincial living could reinforce family, property, and class harmony—but they also laid out conditions for their support of decentralization. Transfers should not harm unions or put workers in a situation of dependency on their employer. The CFTC also wanted decentralized workers to maintain their Parisian wages and get better housing than in the capital. Finally, the union requested a tripartite Decentralization Committee to ensure that regional policy was a force for social uplift, not for undercutting labor.[123] The Christian unionists thus took Vichy's reformist project at face value, but in doing so they enumerated all the reasons it was impossible to achieve. Parisians would only decentralize if they could obtain better working and living conditions; manufacturers had the exact opposite goal, hoping to slash wages and undermine unions, all the while avoiding new responsibilities for social overhead.

This economic contradiction, between enticing Parisian workers to move and making decentralization profitable, created a split between the more authoritarian and the more pragmatic members of the Dessus team. The authoritarians had a brazen disregard for workers' desires. Jean Parenteau, who worked for the business-friendly think tank CEGOS, succinctly summarized the reasons for the capital's attraction: "pour l'ouvrier, quitter Paris, c'est quitter les distractions pour aller dans un bled où il n'y a pas plus de confort et où la vie n'est pas beaucoup moins chère, mais où les salaires sont beaucoup moins élevés." Yet he saw this as all the more reason to simply bypass workers' desires:

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[122] Guy Thorel, "La décentralisation industrielle - Premières conclusions," June 1944, CAC 19770777/1.
[123] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 70. A good summary is in Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 109-111. The Dessus team's internal report is Guy Thorel, "La décentralisation industrielle - Premières conclusions," June 1944, CAC 19770777/1. For the CFTC's postwar stance, see Guy Bohn in "La Décentralisation industrielle," *Reconstruction et Industrie*, fasciule 3, report of the "19ème cycle d'études de la CEGOS," 12-16 November 1945, 49-56.

"on ne peut se fier à l'opinion ouvrière elle-même."[124] Gravier made the most elaborate plea for an authoritarian solution, demanding the "migration forcée" of 400,000 Parisian workers in August 1944, as France was being liberated. Gravier explained, "nous préférons des mesures peut-être plus brutales, mais d'un rendement certain...[Sans elles] on trouverait aussitôt des ouvriers sans usines, des usines sans ouvriers, et l'expérience aurait pris fin."[125]

Guy Bohn, who had reported on the aircraft decentralization, drew the opposite conclusion. The aircraft experience showed that it was impossible to force Parisian workers to accept worse conditions in the provinces. The government should therefore shift its focus to a generation-long project of equalizing wages and living conditions across France, "pour que ce soit le fils de l'ouvrier qui quitte Paris," of his own free will, and so that "le fils du fermier qui serait venu à Paris...aille ailleurs."[126] Dessus agreed. There were too many "obstacles pratiques" in the short term to "la réduction réelle des effectifs ouvriers des grands centres."[127] Government planners should take a cue from the aircraft sector, renouncing decentralization for decentralized expansion—building up a new workforce and industrial apparatus in the provinces.

This debate was less about ends than about means. Despite their diverse ideological leadings, the participants in the DGEN studies all shared the conceit that the Paris region was no place for workers, who belonged in rural and small-town settings. And none denied the team's main finding: social and economic realities directly contrasted pastoral assumptions about the provinces' advantages for living and working. Where they split was on the issue of state intervention. Gravier gave voice to desires for a radical *dirigisme*, in which the government would force workers to move and requisition vast resources to provide a garden lifestyle in the provinces. Dessus took a less draconian tack. His focus on decentralized expansion shifted planning from a

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[124] Parenteau of CEGOS to Dessus, 7 September 1943, CAC 19770777/5.
[125] Gravier, "Les Justifications humaines de la décentralisation industrielle et ses modalités," August 1944, MRU CAC 19770777/3.
[126] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 28; Bohn, "Décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 32, CAC 19770777/2.
[127] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 31, 33, 91, 95. Dessus learned this on his trip to London in 1945. Dessus to Dautry, 21 September 1945, CAC 19790540/1. An interwar official working on industrial decentralization had argued the same thing. Surun, "État de la question du décongestionnement industriel de la Région parisienne," February 1935, CAC 19770911/50.

negative endeavor—trying to push factories and workers out of Paris—to a positive one: bringing new jobs to regional communities. Yet it also reflected a downgrading of social ambitions. If Parisian workers refused provincial wages, decentralizers would focus on a rural workforce that could not be so demanding.

3. Mobilizing the Provincial Worker

The DGEN soon realized that it took major savings on workers' wages to make decentralization profitable.[128] Certainly, the main promise of rural and small-town France was its abundance of cheap and docile labor. The Dessus team's interviews with business leaders made it clear that, aside from strategic imperatives, low wages and social peace were the key motivations for leaving Paris.[129] As to whether salary differentials were enough to offset the added costs of provincial production, however, Dessus' interviews revealed "un dédale de contradictions."[130] Looking to establish a ready doctrine for a profitable decentralization, the Vichy experts declared that there were two main variables: the standardization of production and corporate control over the labor market.

Many manufacturers considered provincial workers unfit even for unskilled work.[131] The employers interviewed by the DGEN's Jean Delvert thought in terms of a dual geographic hierarchy of labor quality, declining from big cities to rural areas, and from more industrial to less industrial regions. The Norman peasant thus personified the hopelessly backwards rural. In order to turn him into an industrial worker, Delvert wrote, "il faudra complètement modifier [s]a mentalité."[132] The fact that business officials frequently couched such assumptions in a discourse of race, climate, and *mentalité* only shows how sticky they believed regional differences to be. The Vichy team did more to

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[128] As Renault's new president, Pierre Lefaucheux, said in a 1945 conference, it took "de très grandes disparités" in workers' wages to make decentralization profitable. "La Décentralisation industrielle," *Reconstruction et Industrie*, fascicule 3, report of the "19ème cycle d'études de la CEGOS," 12-16 November 1945, 23.

[129] "Aussi est-ce pour payer moins cher leurs ouvriers que les patrons ont, jusqu'à ce jour, pratiqué la décentralisation," Delvert wrote in his initial summary of interviews with business leaders. In most cases, industrialists who decentralized were able to pay provincial wages that were 10-40 percent less than in Paris. Jean Delvert, "Les Questions de la main-d'œuvre et la décentralisation industrielle. La leçon des récentes tentatives (1920-1940)," 10-11, CAC 19770777/2.

[130] Dessus to Chevalier, note # 144, CAC 1977077/1.

[131] Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle," 95, 100-102.

[132] Delvert, "Les Questions de la main-d'œuvre et la décentralisation industrielle. La leçon des récentes tentatives (1920-1940)," 11, CAC 19770777/2.

reinforce this thinking than to eradicate it. DGEN members studied the influence of race and climate on labor productivity, and Dessus called for more research on the topic in his 1949 conclusions. He even pushed the DGEN's climate theory on a skeptical Board of Trade official during a visit to London in 1945—a revealing insight into the particularity of French officials' obsession with the matter.[133]

The standardization of production, however, promised to liberate manufacturers from regionally specific industrial skills. People with little factory experience could be quickly trained to operate a highly Taylorized production line; employers could thus keep recruitment local, leaving all but a tiny elite of managers and specialists behind in Paris. Dessus proclaimed this "le 'plus grand commun dénominateur'" of his interviews with business leaders: "S'il s'agit de travaux en série, une organisation scientifique complète comportant préparation du travail, bureau des temps, chronométrage, préparation des outillages...doit permettre d'obtenir n'importe où avec une main-d'œuvre convenablement formée à peu près le même rendement."[134]

This Fordist division of labor would soon seem self-evident as the main strategy for profitable decentralization, but Dessus found that a number of interwar manufacturers had only come to this solution through a process of trial-and-error. The president of the SIFA foundry, headquartered in the Paris suburb of Courbevoie, explained his experience at a wartime conference on decentralization organized by the Centre des jeunes patrons (CJP). In response to the 1936 strikes, SIFA created a new plant in Saint-Quentin-sur-Indrois ("village de 835 habitants"). He initially tried to convince his managers and skilled workers to come with him, where they would train locally hired casters, before finally giving up and standardizing his new factory. Retooling had a major up-front cost

[133]"[L]'influence du climat," and the regional differences of "race" that it shaped, was a "question fort importante" requiring more study, Dessus wrote in 1949. Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 42-43. Pierre Bourdieu once turned to Montesquieu's eighteenth-century climate theory—which precisely used climactic differences to confirm and explain the difference between the supposedly active and virile populations of northern France and the lazy and dominated populations of the south—as a reminder that social science can reproduce the most fantastic and inadmissible social prejudices. Pierre Bourdieu, "Le Nord et le Midi: contribution à une analyse de l'effet Montesquieu," *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 65 (1980): 159.

[134] Dessus note on industrial decentralization (ca. 1945), Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/167.

but it more than paid off in the long run, allowing him to leave the Parisians behind and to drop the local casters for cheaper unskilled workers.[135]

The French taxpayer funded most interwar experiments with the extreme deskilling of work, through the decentralization of defense production. The aircraft industry provided the most stunning example. An industry reputed for skilled craftsmanship, it shifted to mass production and hired tens of thousands of new workers with breathtaking speed.[136] This shift occurred in the Paris region as well, but decentralized factories pushed the experiment with standardization to an extreme. The scarcity of skilled workers in the provinces became a direct block on production. Employers went to great lengths to find specialists and then people with any industrial experience at all: draining workers and artisans from across their regions with the enticement of high wages, setting up multi-year programs to train more, and even hiring skilled refugees fleeing the wars in Spain and Alsace-Lorraine. But nothing solved the problem of skilled labor. Military mobilization in 1939 and then the German conscription of workers only aggravated the situation.[137]

Provincial managers thus scrambled to retool factories and rapidly train local farmers, youth, and finally women, who counted for half of the workforce in some decentralized factories. New "centres de formation accélérée" prepared these novices for the lowest-grade assembly jobs (*manœuvre spécialisé*) in just three weeks.[138] The decentralized aircraft factories soon got up to Parisian production levels. Some companies continued to complain that rural workers absconded to complete farm work and that "l'ambiance climatique amoindrit le rendement."[139] Bohn himself reported that even on standardized machines, provincial workers achieved lower productivity than in Paris, "où l'ouvrier est plus actif et possède beaucoup d'esprit d'initiative." Nonetheless,

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[135] Conference of the Centre des jeunes patrons (CJP), "Centralisation et décentralisation industrielles," April 1943, CAC 19770777/2; Jean Delvert, "Les Questions de la main-d'œuvre et la décentralisation industrielle. La leçon des récentes tentatives (1920-1940)," 10-11, CAC 19770777/2.

[136] Scott found that in Britain as well, state-subsidized armaments decentralization were crucial for promoting new spatial divisions of labor among industry, Peter Scott, *Triumph of the South: A Regional Economic History of Early Twentieth Century Britain* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007), 277.

[137] Bohn, "Décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," 27-28, CAC 19770777/2.

[138] Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques*, 249.

[139] The quote is Air-Équipement, installed at Blois. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 3, 19-26.

the results were impressive. "On ne peut que s'étonner en constatant ces résultats satisfaisants," Bohn marveled.[140]

Gravier proclaimed, "Il apparaît donc que l'existence d'un 'climat industriel' n'est pas indispensable aux usines nouvelles, comme on le prétend trop souvent."[141] Even the Air Ministry's labor specialist decided that the new plants disproved the venerable myth according to which only trained male workers could produce good airplanes.[142] On the other hand, aircraft decentralization underscored the fact that standardization did not free all industrial work from its dependency on Paris. Skilled workers and engineering remained concentrated in Paris.[143] Meanwhile, the fusion of private firms into nationalized companies actually centralized decision-making in Paris, in expanded company headquarters and the Air Ministry.[144]

Dessus repackaged these outcomes as a universal rule for business, which amounted to a promotion of the Fordist spatial division of labor. In new provincial plants, he wrote, it was necessary to "rationaliser la fabrication d'une manière très poussée," both to mobilize unskilled provincial labor and to "éviter l'appel à une main-d'œuvre de spécialistes," who were so hard to move out of Paris.[145] As such, mechanics, engineering, and other higher functions "seraient...moins opportunément décentralisées" than assembly lines. Indeed, Dessus entertained the notion that work which required personal initiative might remain a particularly urban phenomenon. Only Paris and other industrial centers allowed workers to gain experience in a variety of companies, develop the "qualités d'initiative [et] de débrouillage" necessary to skilled tasks, and more generally cultivate the "rapides réflexes qu'impose la vie urbaine." The power of

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[140] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 3, 21.
[141] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 289-291.
[142] As Chadeau put it, the official "professait (en secret) une opinion sacrilège: l''exclusivité' des 'qualifications' aéronautiques [among trained male workers] était un mythe." Emmanuel Chadeau, *De Bleériot à Dassault: Histoire de l'industrie aéronautique en France, 1900-1950* (Paris: Fayard, 1987), 322.
[143] This was reflected in a division by sectors of production. Airframe construction, which was the most easily standardized and concentrated in nationalized companies, saw its provincial proportion shoot up to seventy percent by 1942. Engine production, which remained mostly in private hands and continued to require large amounts of skilled labor and inter-firm linkages, clung to Paris. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 3, p. 6; Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 119-120, 241; Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques*, 248; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 51-52.
[144] Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques*, 248; Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 164.
[145] Dessus, "Introduction à l'étude de la localisation de l'industrie," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 1 (DGEN 1944), 12.

Parisian workers to resist moving, the influence of urban milieu on job culture, and the fact that non-standardized tasks (such as product design) required proximity to specialist subcontractors all dovetailed to justify leaving higher-quality aspects of production in large cities.[146]

A new segmentation of production was only one element in the making of a profitable decentralization. The DGEN studies revealed that workers' wages, company spending on housing and transportation, and corporate profits varied widely among the experiences of the 1930s. Those differences had to do with control over the labor market. Low wages were a potential bonanza, but a manufacturer who needed to hire in an unfavorable job market could quickly find himself making costly concessions in wage hikes and social benefits. Parisian industrialists often overlooked this reality, accustomed as they were to the capital's vast labor supply.

Companies who did it right could bank fantastic savings on wages. Louis Chevalier, a member of the DGEN team, boasted in a business magazine about Salmson, which had opened factories in the Anjou region for defense production. The new plants "ont fourni des obus à 1/3 du prix de Billancourt grâce à des salaires peu élevés et à un rendement meilleur."[147] Teste likewise managed to pay its workers at Alençon a third less than in Paris, "si bien que depuis 1937 l'usine parisienne n'a pu continuer à lutter contre la concurrence et a dû fermer."[148]

On the other hand, executives also reported a series of errors to the DGEN. Teste itself had initially fallen prey to the assumption that farm populations were an available labor pool, ripe for the picking. It intended to recruit among the Alençon region's "overpopulated" farms, only to find out that the local agriculture was prosperous and that farmers rejected the assembly line. The company was forced to "importer 60 ouvriers sur

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[146] This was not just a question of distance to clients, but of urban milieu's influence on workers. Firms that could not standardize production needed "une main-d'œuvre ayant passé dans plusieurs entreprises," having gained the "qualités d'initiative, de débrouillage" and a habitude "aux rapides réflexes qu'impose la vie urbaine." Specialized workers—"dont le type serait l'ouvrier parisien de mécanique générale"—were urban beings. So, to some extent, were engineers, research functions, and "l'entretien de l'outillage." Dessus, "État de la question au 1er mai 1945," *Rapports et travaux* vol. 9 (DGEN 1945), 10; Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 42, 46-47.

[147] Louis Chevalier, "L'entreprise et la décentralisation industrielle," *Hommes et techniques* (January 1945): 28.

[148] Jean Delvert, "Les Questions de la main-d'œuvre et la décentralisation industrielle. La leçon des récentes tentatives (1920-1940)," 10-11, CAC 19770777/2.

80." Jean Delvert drew the clear lesson: manufacturers needed to target "des régions, sinon pauvres, du moins dont les ressources agricoles sont insuffisantes."[149] Some manufacturers regretted to Delvert that they had stayed too close to an industrial center. Worms, for instance, built a rural factory but put it too close to Reims, and ended up having to align its salaries on the city's textiles industry.[150] Others felt they had strayed too far from urban centers. An isolated job market held out the promise of dominating local workers, but if a higher-paying firm set up shop nearby, a thin labor pool suddenly created fierce competition, forcing companies to contend with each other on wages and benefits.[151] In the worst-case scenario, an absolute shortage of workers forced companies to turn back to their Parisian personnel, offering new concessions in a desperate attempt to convince them to decentralize.[152]

Once again, the aircraft industry gave Dessus the clearest lesson about the importance of labor-market planning in making decentralization profitable. Bohn found that aircraft companies had thought little about labor when they chose their new locations, which were "trop souvent dans des contrées dépeuplées." This was a costly error. "Ainsi l'entreprise décentralisée, avec l'espoir de nombreuses commandes, s'est efforcée de conquérir (le mot n'est pas exagéré) de la main-d'œuvre et ensuite de la conserver." Most aircraft plants had just 500 to 700 workers, but even these small factories exhausted entire regional labor pools in thinly populated areas.[153] Established centers faced equally dramatic shortages. Toulouse saw its aircraft workforce soar from 2,825 in 1937 to 16,500 by June 1940. Salaries doubled between 1936 and 1938 at the Société nationale des constructions aéronautiques du Midi (SNCAM).[154] Here as elsewhere, desperation for labor forced some companies to send buses dozens of

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[149] Ibid, 4.
[150] Ibid, 12.
[151] As Delvert summed up the problem, "dans tous les petits centres industriels, une industrie chasse l'autre; dès que s'établit une nouvelle usine elle a tendance à recruter son personnel parmi les ouvriers des usines déjà existantes. C'est ainsi qu'à Cuise-la-Motte, les établissements Deraisme et Vallette (jumelles) ont eu beaucoup de mal à garder leurs ouvriers du jour où s'est établie une grande usine de produits chimique (Bozel-Malèra)." Ibid, 6.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ziegel, "Dissémination de l'industrie française," CAC 19770777/2.
[154] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 189-191; Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques*, 249. On Toulouse primes, see Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 25.

kilometers out into the countryside and provide housing for provincial, as well as Parisian, personnel.[155]

The regional labor competition and wage hikes created by the new aircraft plants posed three problems for the DGEN experts. First of all, aircraft employers had initially counted on lower wages to make their new provincial plants cheaper to operate that their Paris region sites, but in the end overruns on factory retooling, wage hikes, and new social responsibilities generally drove decentralization into the red.[156] This was bad news for officials who needed to make decentralization profitable without major state subsidies. Secondly, labor competition provoked "l'anathème le plus violent" from provincial business interests.[157] Dessus and his successors concluded that if government officials did not do a better job catering to these low-wage firms—and the public authorities who protected them—decentralization policy was headed for a political graveyard as well as an economic one. Finally, plentiful jobs with relatively high pay attracted peasants and farm workers away from the land and women away from the home, upsetting Vichy's program of protecting the existing social order of the provinces.[158]

In response to this labor competition, Dessus decided it was the state's responsibility to limit local work offers and to keep provincial wages deflated. Planners set out to do so by proselytizing lessons for profitable labor management among French business and by actively orchestrating regional job markets. As Dessus put it, state officials would have to dose new decentralization to local labor surpluses, in order to ensure "que le 'pompage de main-d'œuvre ne se fasse pas trop sentir sur des points

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[155] In Tarbes, workers even biked up to 50 kilometers per day to get to work. Those that were launching new plants had a harder time than those simply transferring production to an existing site; in bad labor markets or installed near urban centers. Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 17-19, 35.

[156] "En définitive," Bohn concluded of the aircraft experience, "la décentralisation ne fut pas une opération économique; heureusement que d'autres considérations en exigent l'application." In "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 19, 26. For more information, see also the longer original report, "Décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," CAC 19770777/2.

[157] Ibid., 19.

[158] Bohn condemned decentralized factories for draining the "forces vives de l'agriculture, secteur qui devrait pourtant resté inviolé," and complained that "[l]a femme qui travaille prend la mentalité de l'ouvrier qui a besoin de distractions autres que celles que procurent le foyer et l'enfant." Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 21, 23-25. Dessus had the same ideal, Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 64.

étroitement déterminés."[159] He turned to France's reserve army of rural labor, recommending that government officials steer new industrialization "dans les régions agricoles actuellement 'surpeuplées'; puis dans celles où l'on peut dégager de la main-d'œuvre en transformant les techniques et le système agricole."[160] The geographer Pierre George provided the first model of this new labor planning. In 1943, he mapped out France's rural labor reserves by crossing local statistics on agricultural population, demographic growth, and existing job rates. The largest pockets of surplus workers were in the rural arc that ran through Basse Normandie, Brittany, and the Vendée.[161]

The DGEN presented its recommendations as a matter of technocratic efficiency, but its new program had a remarkable class bias. Bohn and Dessus aimed to limit new work opportunities, which empowered workers and undermined corporate control. And their presentation of aircraft decentralization as an unfortunate excess of job creation and wage hikes silenced the provincial push—led by urban boosters and labor unions—for rapid growth and equalization. In Toulouse, a broad coalition of political, business, and labor leaders lobbied hard to bring a maximum of factories and defense contracts to the city. The city's unions then took advantage of the influx of jobs and the new lobbying opportunities created by nationalization, scoring wage gains and gaining more power in the workshop.[162] In Bourges, workers at the Société Nationale de Constructions Aéronautiques du Centre (SNCAC) likewise demanded that their wages be aligned on the company's Billancourt factory.[163] The ultimate front in this push for equalization was the

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[159] Ibid., 73-74.

[160] Ibid., 73-75, 98. Gravier complained: "La seule région où l'on pouvait espérer un recrutement assez abondant sans incidence néfaste sur l'agriculture—nous voulons parler de la Bretagne—est aussi la seule où l'on n'ait installé aucune usine décentralisée!" Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 291.

[161] As well as the southwest, the Landes, and Basse Pyrénées Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950), 15; George, "Etude statistique."

[162] They also obtained the incorporation of the Latécoère company—whose reactionary founder refused the 1936 reforms—in the nationalized SNCAM. By the early 1930s, aircraft manufacturing at Toulouse was in utter depression, despite national expansion in the industry. A broad convergence of local workers, business leaders, and politicians lobbied hard to win a series of projects: the creation of the SNCAM, rearmament contracts, and other decentralization operations, which sponsored a new Bréguet factory and two research and testing units. Toulouse's second main aircraft employer, Emile Dewoitine, Finance Minister Vincent Auriol, the Chamber of Commerce, and the local newspaper all weighed in support of the cause. Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 66-67, 131-133; Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City*, 189-191.

[163] Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism*, 133-134.

fight for a national contract, which aircraft workers of all stripes supported.[164] Some aircraft manufacturers had an interest in supporting labor's campaign: national equalization gave them an excuse to hike provincial salaries, boosting their recruitment in a time of severe labor shortages, and they could pass the cost of pay raises onto the state. This mutual interest explained the ephemeral success of the national contract in 1938.[165]

Provincial farm and business interests were outraged about the aircraft industry's high wages, which they saw as unfair competition for their labor, and fiercely fought the national contract.[166] They had powerful allies in the administration. In Châteauroux, for example, the prefect complained that the SNCASO now paid between 70 and 112 percent more than local industries. Like Bohn and Dessus, the prefect wrote that it was dangerous to have too many good jobs in the provinces, since farm laborers could see "aircraft workers, especially the unskilled, earning very high wages while often working under less harsh conditions."[167] Local interests also beat back company-specific efforts. In Bourges, aircraft workers failed to get labor relations removed from the framework of local bargaining instances; in other towns, manufacturers likewise fought to force aircraft factories to obey by regional collective contracts.[168]

The DGEN team took a clear side in this standoff between provincial workers and low-wage business interests. Gravier denounced aircraft decentralization as "une expérience bâclée," in which the competition for labor had led to "la désorganisation totale" of local economies.[169] Bohn went so far as to conclude, "que si les professions qui décentraliseront dans l'avenir leurs entreprises sont obligées d'agir comme l'aviation dut le faire, il vaut mieux ne plus parler de décentralisation."[170] His report heavily

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[164] Ibid., 128.
[165] Ibid., 187, 204-211.
[166] Constructors' acceptance of the national contract was a heresy in French business circles that helped lead to aircraft builders' withdrawal from national organizations for metalworking employers (UIMM and GIMM). Ibid., 137-138.
[167] Ibid., 137,185-199, 205.
[168] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 23-26; Ibid., 133-134.
[169] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 291.
[170] Bohn, "Etude sur la décentralisation de l'industrie aéronautique," *Rapports et travaux* (DGEN) vol. 3, 12-13, 18, 19, 30.

influenced postwar planners, who condemned the wage hikes as so many "déboires" to be avoided.[171]

Such reactions ensured that the new planning project taking shape at the end of the war would be as much about limiting equalization and pressures for social change as about homogenizing the French territory. Employers clearly grasped the twin elements of this conservative project: the spatial segmentation of production by job skill and the defense of low wages. Yet their costly errors and widely divergent results convinced DGEN officials that the state had a role to play in orchestrating the outcome of new industrialization. Fordist decentralization could give provincial workers a platform to demand better benefits from their Parisian headquarters just as it could allow the latter to undercut their well-paid workforce in the capital. For the DGEN leaders, the need to make decentralization profitable, placate provincial business interests, and ensure social stability was a reason for state planners to tip the balance of forces in businesses' favor.

Conclusion

The decentralization experiences of the 1930s and the Vichy studies revealed regional disparities of unsuspected magnitude. Paris had a commanding lead across the board: in workers' skills, wages, and collective power; in modern economic infrastructure; and most surprisingly in housing, amenities, and social well-being. Reformers initially assumed that the ills of living and producing in the capital would provide the impetus for a vigorous decentralization program. In reality, the poverty of the provinces posed a tall hurdle for shrinking the capital's industry without massive state subsidies or overbearing government pressure on businesses and workers to leave.

In response to this extreme polarization, Dessus, Gravier, and their fellow state experts sketched out a framework for postwar regional policy. The government would need to accept a broad role in promoting provincial development. Defense decentralization provided a carrot-and-stick system—of both forcing and subsidizing the relocation of manufacturing—which could serve as a blueprint for postwar policies. Yet even this intervention, resisted as unacceptable *dirigisme* until war became an imminent

[171] For the integration of the aircraft decentralization lessons on local labor competition (denounced "déboires") by postwar planners at the MRU, see SARP, "Note sommaire sur le problème industriel dans la Région parisienne," December 1949, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6.

danger, would not achieve substantial results without a broader development program. Parisian manufacturers expected better economic overhead, such as roads, rail hookups, and even subsidized factories; they also demanded that the state socialize housing and transportation, which employers rarely paid for in the capital. No less important, government experts needed to change business assumptions and practices. The DGEN and its successors took it upon themselves to condense interwar lessons into clear guidelines for a profitable decentralization, directly accompany key projects, and stack labor markets in companies' favor.

These were long-term goals, which looked far beyond the scarcities and competing political priorities of war and reconstruction. In the meantime, the DGEN studies exposed two fundamental tensions, which structured the framework of postwar planning debates. The first tension concerned the timing and process of Paris decentralization. Vichy's initial social ideal—transferring factories and workers out of the capital—created tremendous material difficulties, costs, and conflicts. This realization created a split among the French planners: between those who hoped to obtain immediate decentralization through authoritarian means and those who, on the contrary, advocated planning for a more gradual and less contentious disinvestment from the capital. The twin political projects of directly attacking industrial Paris and silently undermining its economic base both had their roots in the anti-urban atmosphere of the late Third Republic and Vichy years.

The second tension of the DGEN studies concerned the model of provincial development to promote. On the one hand, the disparities between Paris and the provinces fostered an ambitious planning project: the homogenization of skills, infrastructure, and urban amenities among France's regions, so that manufacturers would be as eager to produce in provincial cities as managers, engineers, and skilled workers were to live in them. Yet the DGEN argued as much on behalf of preserving disparities as for eradicating them. Defending the provinces' low wages and anemic consumption was the easiest way to attract industry out of Paris. Branch-plant industrialization provided the means for this lower path to development. Planners could begin transferring Taylorized production in search of cheaper labor while waiting for the urban improvements that could attract the more elite ranks of French industry.

In a few short years, the Vichy ideal of moving Parisian workers to small-town France would seem like a quixotic and backward-looking endeavor. It nonetheless has a heuristic value. These early plans underscore the extent to which French regional policy was rooted in an elite attack on working-class Paris. Just as importantly, they make explicit the fundamental inequalities of postwar Fordism: in order to make decentralization profitable, companies and planners turned to poorer provincials to work in conditions that no Parisian would accept. In both of these projects—Paris containment and low-wage industrialization—the Liberation brought more continuity than rupture with Vichy's programs. Preparing the DGEN's final report in 1945, Dessus' adjunct, C. Henry, recommended eliminating "philosophical" arguments that smacked too much of the National Revolution—lamenting nonetheless, "tant pis...si des raisons pour nous essentielles ne sont même pas mentionnées."[172] Modifying discourse was the price to pay for saving the essential of Vichy's project.

The same year, Louis Chevalier showed how easily agrarian social ideals could be revamped as a modern industrial logic. Summarizing the Dessus studies for a business magazine, Chevalier wrote that it was time for French manufacturers to give up their naive belief in "les prétendues qualités 'natives' de l'ouvrier parisien."[173] Bewitched by the power of Paris' working class, he wrote, France's "patronat assoupi s'est laissé distancer par l'étranger," where employers had long been moving production to regions with cheaper and more docile labor. Indeed, the Parisian companies that did decentralize in the 1930s were exceptions that proved the rule: their fumbling job only underscored how little French business had mastered the decentralization game. "Il ne s'agit plus seulement de fuir les grèves ou les bombes et de les fuir le plus vite possible et à tout prix," Chevalier chided, "mais de réaliser dans le temps convenable des déplacements heureux et rentables d'établissements."[174] Here was an agrarian argument that corporate executives and economic modernizers could understand; Vichy left them with the institutional framework and the practical game plan they would need.[175]

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[172] C. Henry, "Observations sur le rapport: 'État de la question au 1 avril 1945,'" doc. 104, CAC 19770777/3.
[173] Chevalier, "L'entreprise et la décentralisation industrielle," 28.
[174] Ibid.: 23.
[175] Chevalier's text was the first step in providing a game plan. He called it a "mémento de l'entreprise en voie de décentralisation." Ibid.: 24.

CHAPTER TWO

Containing Paris

The government planners in charge of the Paris region until 1961 have earned a reputation for being anti-Parisian and "Malthusian," and it is not hard to see why. Jean-François Gravier's classic, *Paris et le désert français* (1947), was an outpouring of vitriol against the capital that showed little concern for the region's role in the national economy, refused to relinquish old hygienist myths about the ills of city living, and above all had little patience for the desires of Parisians themselves.[1] Gravier was an extreme case, perhaps, but at war's end the new Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism (MRU)—which centralized control of urban and regional planning across the nation—hoped to implement Vichy's plans for quickly shrinking the place of industry and workers in the capital. They started with the most emblematic target of all: initial plans called for the immediate eradication of the giant Renault car factories at Billancourt, the heart of France's labor movement, through a mass decentralization of factories and workers to the provinces. Renault was supposed to be the opening salvo of a broader set of factory transfers. The MRU even limited housing construction and other urban infrastructure in an attempt to suffocate the capital's growth.[2]

In the realm of industry, however, the planners' decentralization programs were more a lightning rod for criticism than a political reality. Parisian politicians and labor leaders condemned decentralization as a state-led attack on the capital's economy and working class, with good reason. Few manufacturers saw the economic logic of moving to the provinces, and even fewer had the money to undertake such a costly venture given the postwar credit crunch. The MRU's own study commission itself repeated the wartime findings that decentralization was not a profitable endeavor. This cost calculation meant that the state would have to subsidize industrialists' move, but the MRU was also at pains to convince the Finance Ministry and economic modernizers in

[1] Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947), 192-193.
[2] Annie Fourcaut, "Les premiers grands ensembles en région parisienne. Ne pas refaire la banlieue?" *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 121, 130.

the administration that decentralization was profitable for the broader national interest—especially at a time when scarce resources were being focused on rebuilding basic infrastructures and production. Jean Faucheux, the MRU's discouraged director of industrial decentralization, lamented that in France regional disparities would never capture the public's imagination as "de grands maux appelant de grands remèdes."[3]

In sum, the plans hatched under Vichy were indeed "Malthusian": in the name of territorial balance and urban containment, they carried a major political and economic cost without much to show in terms of benefits. Yet that is precisely why early planners got so little done. The Finance Ministry refused all but the most modest subsidies. Without money to make a move attractive, the MRU obtained almost no decentralization from manufacturers before 1950 and little before the second half of the decade. This was a sign of containment's weakness, but it also reflected MRU officials' own recognition that Malthusianism had definite limits. The ministry largely accepted that they could not force manufacturers to disrupt production and move out of the capital until they could make decentralization profitable. This is why the planners shelved their most ambitious projects—beginning with the plan to shrink Billancourt—and remained meek in their use of land-use controls, which in principle could be used to block factory growth. Powerful corporations, their defenders at the Ministry of Industry and in Paris region municipalities, and the national priority of a rapid return to growth all trumped containment, and the MRU knew it. However much it irked them, then, the proponents of containment governed over an unprecedented expansion of Parisian industry. The tremendous investments of reconstruction went to rebuilding the Paris region's industrial apparatus, fueling two decades of strong growth that took the capital's working class to its historic height in 1962.

Paradoxically, however, this rapid growth itself set the stage for a rapid increase in decentralization, in two respects. In terms of state intervention, first of all, the mix of tremendous industrial development in the Paris region and economic decline in much of the provinces finally pushed through the *dirigiste* decentralization measures urban planners had been demanding since the late 1920s. I trace this political turnabout from the viewpoint of provincial economies in the next chapter. From the capital's

[3] Jean Faucheux, "Aperçus sur une politique d'industrialisation décentralisée," *Urbanisme* 3-4 (1951): 37.

perspective, the advantages of steering new development out of the region were clear: Parisian manufacturers suffered from an acute labor shortage after 1954, the region had an explosive mix of an unprecedented housing crisis and tremendous immigration, and removing factories was a precondition for Paris' renovation as a world-class city. Rapid expansion also dulled the threat of deindustrialization to the region's workers and blue-class suburbs, if not to its urban core, now clearly planned for redevelopment.

Secondly, this reduced concern that decentralization spelled deindustrialization delved from the fact that much of Parisian manufacturers' new investments in the provinces in fact concerned overspill growth. In a period of rapid expansion, the large auto, electronics, and aircraft companies that assured the majority of decentralization jobs were opening new sites to keep pace with tremendous demand; the actual transfer of Parisian jobs out to the regions remained a minority situation, especially before 1960. As both provincial job creation and the Paris region's own blue-collar workforce grew at astounding rates, it seemed that decentralization could indeed be a win-win proposal for workers and communities in different regions. Yet here was the second twist to the story of Paris' postwar development: the provincial investments made during these years of high growth were often the first step to future cutbacks in Paris region factories. Once manufacturers had modern decentralized plants, they were more willing to transfer production and disinvest from older sites sitting on valuable urban real estate—often in programs that lasted a number of years and even decades. In many cases, it was only with the drop-off in demand during the 1970s that this phenomenon would become clear. The urban planners at Vichy and the MRU, however, well understood this two-step sequence. Already in the 1940s, they theorized that promoting overspill decentralization at a time of growth, in preparation for the future shrinkage of industrial Paris, would be a less contentious form of state intervention than actually forcing manufacturers out of Paris and subsidizing runaway factories. And as the early postwar years showed the difficulties of rapidly reducing the capital's industry, they largely settled for pursuing this longer-term vision of containment.

In sum, the first fifteen years after the war were a complex period, during which the relationship between state planning, Parisian industry, and the capital's role in the national economy changed rapidly. Placing the early postwar years under the sign of

Malthusian planning hides more than it reveals. Rapid growth was not just a radical disappointment of the ambitious programs rolled out in 1944, but also contrasted with the decentralization trends in cities like London and New York. Gravier and other like-minded planners spoke a tough talk of geographic *dirigisme*, but in the end the MRU was particularly powerless to stop the capital's expansion—and was perhaps even complicit in fueling it—thanks to the primacy of business interests, Parisian municipalities, and national growth over regional change. Yet concluding that containment was a failure is equally misleading. The generation of planners in power from the 1930s to the 1950s set the stage for the vigorous decentralization policy that would be enacted when the political and economic forces turned against regional imbalance in 1955. Alongside the other two forces behind the decline of Paris region manufacturing in the following decades—corporate restructuring and urban renovation—the government regime for factory flight emerged from the apogee of working-class Paris.

1. Reconstruction

Postwar reconstruction offered a unique window of opportunity to decentralize Parisian manufacturing. Vichy bequeathed the Fourth Republic a centralized urban planning regime, a decentralization program, and a cadre of experts to implement it.[4] Wartime destruction and the uprooting of population and production created a situation of exceptional geographic fluidity, which planners at the MRU and its Paris planning service, the Service d'aménagement de la Région parisienne (SARP), were determined not to waste. In reality, the first decade after the war proved a boon to Parisian manufacturing. Massive investments went to rebuilding the capital's industrial apparatus; the MRU achieved so little decentralization that many administration officials doubted the possibility of reining in Paris' growth at all.[5] Government planners were

[4] On France's new planning regime and officials' conception of reconstruction as an opportunity to rebuild France's cities on new bases, see Danièle Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises de 1940 à 1954: Histoire d'une politique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997). For Europe more broadly, see Dominique Barjot, Remi Baudouï, and Danièle Voldman, *Les Reconstructions en Europe 1945-1949* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 1997). Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, see pages 393-418 for aménagement du territoire.

[5] Efi Markou writes, "La reconstruction, d'occasion de la décentralisation devient repoussoir." Efi Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," in *Tissu industriel, planification spatiale des activités économiques et rapports sociopolitiques dans la métropole parisienne (1920-1950)*, ed. Efi Markou, Danièle Fraboulet, and Catherine Rhein (Paris: Ministère de l'Équipement, 2005), 129. A strong coalition of big and small firms alike were determined to rebuild the capital's industry. Mixed with relatively minor war destruction

forced to focus on longer-term projects: planning industry out of the region's center, pressuring manufacturers to prepare for a future transfer of production, and above all proselytizing the cause of a more vigorous *aménagement du territoire* policy. However modestly, these efforts began laying the bases for future disinvestment, even as working-class Paris soared to its historic zenith.

In fact, at war's end government planners themselves debated whether to push for an immediate transfer of factories and workers or to focus on preparing a longer-term attrition to shrink the capital's industrial base. This discussion was a carry-over from the war years. It found a public expression in the writings of Gabriel Dessus, who had directed the Vichy studies on industrial decentralization, and Jean-François Gravier. Neither man exercised direct responsibilities for planning, aside from Gravier's brief stint at the MRU in 1945, but they were influential experts, framing public debates and sitting on government study commissions.[6]

Gravier called for the "migration forcée" of Parisian factories and workers. He had developed this authoritarian ideal under Vichy, but he recommended the program in August 1944—in the midst of the Liberation—and retained the idea, now euphemized as "peuplement dirigé," in his famous 1947 book. Gravier's plan for displacing workers reflected the right-wing trope that the urban proletariat did not belong to the nation, which in turn justified an anti-democratic power to change their lives.[7] Tellingly, his model for denying rights to Parisian workers was immigration control. Just as

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compared to other northern regions and the prioritization of industrial reconstruction in state spending, that sent Parisian factories buzzing past their prewar workforce and output. Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 51, 58; Jacqueline Beaujeu-Garnier, *Atlas et géographie de Paris et la région d'Île-de-France* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), 31-34; Hugh Clout, "Ruins and Revival: Paris in the Aftermath of the Second World War," *Landscape Research* 29 (2004): 2, 10, 14; Jacques Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation de la banlieue parisienne," in *Ouvriers en banlieue, XIXe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jacques Girault (Paris: Editions de l'Atelier, 1998), 102. On the history of the growth and decline of Paris region production, also see Jacques Girault, "Désindustrialisation de la banlieue ou refonte du tissu industriel?" *Artisanat, industrialisation, désindustrialisation en Ile-de-France* 51 (2000); Jean Bastié, *Géographie du Grand Paris* (Paris: Masson, 1984); Jean Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," *Notes et études documentaires* (May, 1970).

[6] Gravier was charged to head the MRU's new "Bureau de décentralisation industrielle" in 1945. Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 119.

[7] Or in Gravier's words, Parisian workers had no "conscience de [leur] appartenance à une patrie." Decentralization was needed to assure the "intégration du prolétariat à la communauté nationale." Gravier, "Les Justifications humaines de la décentralisation industrielle et ses modalités," August 1944, MRU CAC 19770777/3. On the "True France" discourse, see Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars over Cultural Identity, 1900-1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), xiii, 8-10.

immigrants should be forced to work in decentralized factories "sous peine de retrait du permis de séjour," he wrote, so too French citizens would also be submitted to "[d]es méthodes aussi rigoureuses." Those methods included forcing "unproductive" members of Parisian society to sign contracts with decentralized factories, requisitioning homes, and refusing unemployment benefits in the capital and other large cities.[8] In the same line of thinking, he demanded a ten-year suspension of all residential construction in the regions of Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, despite the unprecedented severity of the housing crisis.[9]

It was not only on the issue of state authority that Gravier refused to accept the realities of the 1940s. He also continued to propagate anti-urban myths which the Vichy studies had clearly refuted. Despite the demonstration that birth rates and public health were no worse in Paris than elsewhere in France, Gravier argued, "il semble bien que les grandes villes doivent rester 'les tombeaux de la race.'" An entire chapter sought to demonstrate that "Paris dépeuple la France," which made continued investment in the capital "une opération désastreuse pour le budget démographique de la France."[10] The founding father of the Fourth Republic's regional policy was an unrepentant, anti-urban authoritarian.

Dessus took the exact opposite tack as Gravier, demanding in 1949 that "aucune usine ne soit physiquement transportée, ni aucun ouvrier personnellement soumis à une migration forcée." The government should shift its focus from the negative goal of transferring Parisian manufacturing to the positive one of building up a new industrial apparatus and workforce in the provinces.[11] The planners' debate was less about ends than about means. Dessus shared Gravier's goal of containing, even shrinking the

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[8] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 348-349. Five years earlier, Gravier idealized about local citizenship as it survived in the Swiss *commune bourgeoise*, in which only natives of a town could benefit from public services like unemployment relief. Jean-François Gravier, *Régions et nation* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1942), 63-64.

[9] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 262-265.

[10] Gravier spent much of his text on an odd attempt to translate demography into economic capital, and thus show that subsidizing decentralization was a profitable measure. Allowing Paris to grow was "une opération désastreuse pour le budget démographique de la France;" geographic priorities for state spending on housing and public services needed to be based upon a calculation of the "rendement humain" of such investments. Ibid., 263-264.

[11] Gabriel Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique de localisation de l'industrie," in *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 33, 95, see also 31, 91.

capital's industry and population. In his publication of the wartime studies, he dismissed out of hand the kind of progrowth regional plan which would finally be implemented in the 1960s: a mix of urban renovation in central Paris, the deconcentration of industry to its outer suburbs, and a regional transportation network to tie it all together. Dessus mocked such a program for its cost, complexity, "et, d'une façon générale, tous les inconvénients de la civilisation urbaine." Rather than building up an economic super-region and around the capital, the decentralization of Paris would be done on a national scale, by sending population and production to rural provinces.[12]

Yet Dessus rejected a rapid exodus of Parisian factories on the grounds of economic logic, social justice, and political realism. Transferring workers and equipment was costly. Condemning existing plants would only make matters worse, leading to a massive destruction of France's fixed capital and turning industrial neighborhoods into brownfield ruins.[13] Gravier thought that unemployment would convince Parisian workers to move with their factories to the provinces, but the wartime studies had shown just the opposite. Even unemployed Parisians resisted leaving the capital; in any case, manufacturers who moved production dropped their existing workforce for cheaper labor in the provinces. Decentralization was thus a clear recipe for urban unemployment.[14] Last but certainly not least, Dessus recognized the importance of labor power and the political conflicts created by government plans for moving factories. By redefining decentralization as decentralized expansion, Dessus explicitly sought to "calmer les appréhensions des milieux syndicaux ouvriers, qui pourraient craindre le démembrement des forces ouvrières les mieux organisées."[15]

More than any of his fellow planners, Dessus thus appreciated the impressive power and solidity of the Paris region's industry at war's end. An irreplaceable wealth of fixed capital, a reinvigorated working class, and powerful political defenders made Parisian manufacturing unassailable. At the same time, though, Dessus presented his program as a recipe for undermining this industrial base in less than a generation. This

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[12] Dessus, preface to Charles Roussel, "Les transports de la région parisienne et la décentralisation," Délégation générale à l'équipement national, ed., *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels*, vol. 8 (Paris, 1944), 12. Hereafter cited as DGEN, *Rapports et travaux*.
[13] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 31, 33, 91, 95.
[14] Pluyette, "L'expérience de l'association des industries métallurgiques," DGEN, *Rapports et travaux*, Vol. 3 (1944), 45-46; Ibid., 31.
[15] Ibid., 95.

was a two-phase plan. In the short term, manufacturers would simply build up a new production apparatus in the provinces; but with time, Paris' plants would grow older and less attractive, leading manufacturers to close their facilities in the capital and fully transfer production. The Paris region seemed solid now, but within twenty or thirty years government planners could "profiter de l'amortissement, de la vétusté des choses (et des hommes) pour reconstruire et repeupler ailleurs."[16]

Dessus' program required a vigorous state intervention. The government needed to limit new factory construction in the Paris region. This negative pressure would simultaneously prevent industrial concentration from worsening and, by making it harder to modernize existing factories, convince manufacturers to begin planning their future relocation. The state's other task was to improve the provinces' competitive advantage by subsidizing modern factories, infrastructure, and worker training. Compared to Gravier's authoritarian *dirigisme*, however, Dessus' policy sought to hide the state's role in fostering capital migration. Planners would promote broad industrial trends that seemed autonomous from state intervention: the standardization of production, the attraction of regions with cheaper land and labor, and finally corporate cutbacks in congested and outdated production sites.

In sum, Gravier and Dessus both planned the displacement of population and production, but the former demanded immediate results while the latter sought to avoid useless costs and conflicts. One man staged an authoritarian attack on the capital and its people, the other sought to shroud the impact of government policies in seemingly natural economic forces. Decentralized expansion, as Dessus outlined it, was commonly hailed as a "positive" policy—fueling national growth and bringing work to provincial communities—while Gravier's was denounced as a "negative" approach, removing jobs

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[16] "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," *L'Économie rurale* (April, 1953): 5. See also Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 31, 33, 91, 95. The debate between Dessus and Gravier is a classic example of the tension theorized by David Harvey in his notion of "spatial fix." According to Harvey, goals of expanding the geography of production clashes with the relative immobility of fixed capital investments, creating a constant contradiction between continuing to invest in the existing built environment and undertaking the creative destruction necessary to create a new space for accumulation. David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001), chapters 14 and 15, "Geopolitics of Capitalism" and "The Spatial Fix: Hegel, Von Thünen and Marx." See also Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 33-35, 125-126; Bob Jessop, "Spatial Fixes, Temporal Fixes and Spatio-Temporal Fixes," in *David Harvey: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Harvey, Noel Castree, and Derek Gregory (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

and investments from Paris. Yet both programs emerged from the Vichy discussion of how to contain working-class Paris. And in the end, decentralization policy subsidized both runaway factories and gradual disinvestment—often simultaneously, in complex restructurings of production that spanned years, even decades.[17]

At war's end, a number of top administration officials supported the immediate transfer of factories and workers.[18] Vichy experts had drawn up plans for transferring production.[19] Frédéric Surleau, the final director of the DGEN, and Raoul Dautry, the head of the new MRU, called for their implementation. The Paris region's plan (Plan d'aménagement de la région parisienne), likewise announced the displacement of production.[20] Dautry thus told the Constituent Assembly's planning commission, "tout le monde est d'accord;" the government just needed to show more "fermeté" than in the 1930s.[21]

The proponents of decentralization argued that reconstruction created a historic window of opportunity to move production, which would close down for decades if national investments went to rebuilding industry in the Paris region. Partly destroyed factories cost less to move than fully functional ones. The previous decade had also profoundly uprooted the French population. For the first time in recent history, the rural exodus and provincial migration to Paris had been reversed, as the Depression sent

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[17] Jean Bastié and Christian Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation industrielle en France (1954-1984)," *Cahiers du CREPIF* 7 (September, 1984): 36-44. On this point, see also Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 6-7; Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 92, 96, 129-130.

[18] André Prothin to Inspecteurs généraux de l'urbanisme, 17 January 1945, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 3.1.

[19] Vichy called for a broad decentralization plan (Pierre Laval to Louis Renault, 23 April 1943, Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/141). Wartime Organization Committees had drawn up industry-wide "decentralization plans," integrated into their official programs for reconstruction (Dessus to Bellier, director of the DIME, 10 March 1943, 19770777/5; Bellier to Comité d'organisation of mechanics industry, May 1944, CAC 19770777/1). Dautry had pushed for an entire "plan de décentralisation industrielle" before he was moved out of the MRU (Affaires foncières to Directeur général, August 1949, 19770911/50).

[20] The PARP aimed to "décongestionner le centre en éloignant les entreprises industrielles" Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 411. Until 1960, state plans for the Paris region continued to mix a containment policy of stopping the region's industrial growth and a goal of displacing industry and working-class residents to the region's periphery and the provinces. See Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 59, 299-300, 305-306, 324-327; Jean Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine dans la région parisienne, 1945-1972* (Paris: Mouton, 1976), 136-137.

[21] Assemblée consultative: Commission de l'équipement national, minutes of 17 January 1945, audition of Dautry, Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/167; Surleau to Ministère de l'Économie nationale, 8 February 1945, CAC 19770777/5.

unemployed workers packing for their provincial hometowns and the war created a stream of refugees, conscripts, and deportees out of the capital.[22] Moreover, the food shortages that made urban living so harsh during the war continued after the Liberation. Gravier published *Paris et le désert français* at the height of material distress in the French capital.

Officials at the MRU saw this upheaval as an opportunity to rapidly displace production and fix thousands of workers in the provinces. Gravier wrote in support of his decentralization program: "Que sera le déménagement de Pantin à Figeac…pour le mécanicien 'réfugié' dans le Midi pendant l'exode de juin 1940…pour celui qui s'est promené pendant trois ans de stalag en commando—pour celui, enfin, qui a dû s'embarquer à la gare de l'Est pour une ville allemande écrasée sous les bombes."[23] Meanwhile, economic *dirigisme* was at its height, recent nationalizations brought manufacturers like Renault and public services under state control, and the aircraft industry still had its carrot-and-stick decentralization regime, which could be easily expanded into a broader regional policy.

French planners took inspiration from overseas trends. National governments in the U.S. and Britain used war and reconstruction to achieve an awesome geographic restructuring of their national industries. In each case, defense spending and wartime economic controls encountered a political program of regional equalization forged during the 1930s: to develop the U.S. South and to reconvert Britain's hard-hit monoindustry regions. The resulting efforts were historic. The long 1940s achieved some of the most decisive breakthroughs in both countries' regional policies. Britain particularly interested French planners in 1945, since London faced similar pressures as Paris in terms of overheated growth. Following the recommendations of the Barlow Commission, the British government used a mix of positive and negative controls to push more than half of all new factory construction out to the Development Areas between 1945 and 1947. By

[22] Population losses hit the Paris region (-180,000 people) and especially the northeast that served as battlefront (10 percent population losses); gains were concentrated in the south of the country. Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français en 1972* (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), 90; Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958), 95-97; Hubert Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République* (Paris: Économica, 1987), 88-89.

[23] Gravier, "Les Justifications humaines de la décentralisation industrielle et ses modalités," August 1944, 11, MRU CAC 19770777/3.

1951, these regions had received 131,000 jobs from this decentralization effort, on top of 100,000 jobs in government surplus sites converted to peacetime use.[24]

Britain showed French planners that immediate postwar scarcity offered a tool for regional change. Manufacturers' desperation for credit, factory space, and building supplies gave officials in London tremendous clout to steer production to the nation's periphery, which the tax abatements and investment subsidies of later years would never match. This program required strong political leadership. Hugh Dalton, a prominent Labour politician, twice threatened to resign as President of the Board of Trade in order to obtain negative control over factory construction—the "industrial development certificates" (IDC)—to limit new growth in London and the Southeast. His opponents denounced these "dictatorial powers," but the administration pushed radical decentralization until the country's balance of payments crisis made it untenable in 1947.[25]

French planners dreamed of repeating this exploit, but the Hexagon lacked all the elements of the British success. First, France's rapid defeat in 1940 prevented the buildup of defense production in peripheral regions. Only the aircraft industry had the beginnings of a decentralized industrial base, and the Air Ministry concluded that decentralization was a botched policy. Its dispersed factories incurred major cost overruns and failed to serve their defense purpose: the southwestern plants were heavily damaged in air raids, showing that no part of the French territory was safe in a modern war.[26] Secondly, Liberation brought such extreme scarcity that decentralization seemed like a luxury. Finally, *aménagement du territoire* encountered a relatively weak political echo just after the war. Unlike in the U.S. and Britain, France continued to lack a

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[24] Peter Scott, "Dispersion Versus Decentralization: British Location of Industry Policies and Regional Development 1945–60," *Economy and Society* 26 (1997): 583; Ron Martin and Bob Rowthorn, eds., *The Geography of Deindustrialization (London*: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986), 62; Peter Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 67-68.

[25] D. W. Parsons, *The Political Economy of British Regional Policy* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 73, 83-84.

[26] The MRU unsuccessfully pushed the Air Ministry to continue decentralization and wanted even more dissemination of defense production, forbidding factory reconstruction within one and a half kilometers of urban areas. Guy Jalabert, *Les Industries aéronautiques et spatiales en France* (Toulouse: Privat, 1974), 250; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 124-128. In 1952, the Air Ministry wanted to reopen its decentralization fund, which still had seven hundred million francs in it, but could not due to the opposition of the Finance Ministry and the lack of defense production to justify new operations. Lamothe-Dreuzy presentation to the CCEPAN, 17 January 1952, CAC 19770783/3.

determined coalition for provincial industrialization, both in the regions and in the administration.

Part of the problem was the way the MRU itself framed decentralization—namely, as a costly measure of urban decongestion that brought little immediate gain in terms of economic growth. Well into the 1950s, ministry officials reiterated wartime findings that decentralization was not a profitable operation for private industry.[27] This assumption owed in part to their continued reformist conceit that decentralization should give workers better living conditions, which entailed hefty outlays in housing, infrastructure, and urban development. "Il est impossible de ne pas lier un programme de décentralisation industrielle à un programme de construction de logements," Dessus proclaimed in 1949.[28]

Yet even a less ambitious program required more resources than most manufacturers could muster in the first decade after the war. The sheer scarcity of credit in France made building a major plant without state aid all but impossible. The MRU's 1950 study commission thus concluded that obtaining a line of credit subsidies was "le problème essentiel" for decentralization.[29] The dearth of industrial land and modern factory space in the provinces was also a major hurdle. Little investment had been made in this realm in the 1930s and 1940s, and local governments could not afford to build industrial parks; no less frustrating, more than one Parisian company which tried to move found itself bogged down in negotiations over land, as provincial business interests tried to block the arrival of a high-wage competitor.[30] With the MRU itself declaring that only public authorities could reasonably bear the cost of decentralization, it is no wonder

[27] Lamothe-Dreuzy presentations to CCEPAN, 15 November 1951, 17 and 31 January 1952, CAC 19770783/3.
[28] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 54, 61.
[29] Jean-François Gravier, "Note sur l'aménagement du territoire (problèmes de financement)," undated, CAC 19770911/50; Jean-François Gravier, "L'action économique régionale et le deuxième plan de modernisation et d'équipement: cours commun technique" (course lectures, 1953), 25.
[30] Ministère de l'Économie nationale to MRU, 13 February 1946, CAC 19770777/5; Jean Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1959), 112. The relative lack of new factory construction in the provinces during the 1930s and 1940s left the cash-strapped decentralizers with little modern factory space with which to entice firms into moving. "Observations sur le rapport: 'État de la question au 1 avril 1945,'" doc. 104, CAC 19770777/3.

business leaders and their defenders at the Ministry of Industry refused to leave Paris unless the state provided land and subsidies.[31]

The people who could provide new aid—the officials at the Finance Ministry—saw little immediate interest in decentralization. The Finance Ministry dramatically restricted investments of all sorts, in order to focus efforts on reconstructing France's economic bases.[32] The MRU had particular difficulty in arguing that *aménagement du territoire* was a productive use of public money. As its 1950 study commission admitted, the main economic benefits of decentralization were at once long-term and hard to calculate: reducing urban congestion, which weighed on the national budget, and designing a more rational industrial geography. With credit in such short supply, planning for the future was hard to prioritize.[33]

Despite all the fanfare around his *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, Eugène Claudius-Petit saw few of his ideas concretely implemented. The MRU's one modest victory before 1954 was a meagerly endowed credit line to build industrial parks and housing, the Fonds national d'aménagement du territoire (FNAT).[34] In the absence

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[31] The Ministry of Industry defended firms' point of view and refused decentralization as running against their need to reconstitute their profit margins and capital stocks. Contrôleur général A. Spinetta, "Quelques réflexions sur l'expérience des mois passés en matière d'aménagement du territoire," ca. late 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives CHAN 538AP/100.

[32] Within the government, a "Triple Alliance" of interventionist officials from the Plan, the Treasury, and sector-specific ministries such as Industry began pushing for an expanded state role in the economy in the late 1940s, but until the early 1950s they were mostly beaten back by the Finance Ministry. Michel Margairaz, *L'État, les finances et l'économie: Histoire d'une conversion, 1932-1952* (Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 1991), 1289.

[33] The Finance Ministry and Crédit National were opposed to positive discrimination on criteria other than firm profitability and feared that accommodating the MRU would invite claims from other ministries. However, Director of the Treasury François Bloch-Lainé agreed to try to operate a "negative" selection, refusing loans to companies whose Parisian expansion went against decentralization policy. The MRU also got decentralization added to the list of criteria for *bonifications d'intérêt* in early 1952, although it considered this essentially inoperative in a time of credit shortage. See the second and third presentations of Lamothe-Dreuzy on "Les facilités de crédit et d'aménagement fiscaux" for industrial decentralization to the Commission centrale d'étude pour le Plan d'aménagement national, 15 November 1951, 15 and 31 January 1952, CAC 19770783/3, as well as 17 January 1952 which can be found in Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 4.8; Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport* (Paris Imprimerie nationale, 1952), 26-28. Finance fought back the push to expand spending on the two other programs that directly interested decentralization: housing and the modernization of transformation industries. Margairaz, *État, les finances et l'économie*, 1268-1270, 1289.

[34] The Finance Ministry limited the FNAT to a mere1 billion francs—a fraction of the 140 billion pounds that Britain was spending on its "trading states," which had inspired the MRU's scheme. That meant that the FNAT could not do true trading estates—with industrial buildings rented out to companies—but only built the basic infrastructure for the industrial parks and then sold (as opposed to renting) the land to firms. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950), 29. Moreover, Parliament only legalized expropriating land for industrial

of strong positive incentives, the MRU relied on negative pressure by refusing manufacturers' demands for building permits. A SARP note recognized in 1951: "l'action que l'on peut avoir sur un industriel, dont le transfert en province est souhaité, est presque uniquement négative...l'industriel est pratiquement 'chassé' de la Région Parisienne par l'impossibilité de trouver un terrain sur lequel on ne lui oppose pas une interdiction de construire sous un prétexte ou sous un autre."[35] Yet forcing businesses to move without first making it profitable was politically and economically difficult—if not impossible. The extent of the MRU's land-use authority was unclear. Although the ministry had a mandate to decentralize industry and new city plans limited factory construction, MRU officials were unsure if local zoning legislation could be used to push factories out of Paris.[36] Just as importantly, despite its Malthusian reputation, the MRU soon recognized that economic growth trumped decentralization—not least because manufacturers had powerful defenders in the Ministry of Industry. Pierre Gibel, the head of the SARP, thus wrote in 1950 that so long as positive incentives lacked, negative pressure "se heurtera à l'opinion et sera tournée, devra céder le pas devant des impératifs économiques."[37]

The MRU lobbied for enhanced administrative controls on industrial expansion in the Paris region, along the lines of Britain's IDCs and France's own controls on defense production in the 1930s.[38] But such a proposition ran into the same problem as existing

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parks, which was necessary to surmount provincial resistance to outside competitors, in 1953. And on the crucial question of direct capital subsidies for decentralizing industries, Finance officials did not budge an inch until the fall of 1954. One official explained the Finance Ministry's logic: "L'État n'alloue aucun avantage direct pour le transfert ou la création d'établissements...La politique de subventions se révèle toujours très onéreuse pour les finances publiques et elle est peu propice aux initiatives." "Projet d'ordonnance relatif à la décentralisation industrielle," Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/167.

[35] "Aménagement industriel de la Région parisienne," CAC 19770911/50. For the Gibel quote, Gibel to M. Boway, 16 November 1950, CAC 19770911/50. The Paris region's plan affirmed the need to decentralize industry and the government had signed off on a national decentralization policy, two policies reaffirmed respectively by the CARP in 1948 and a government *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* in 1950. That lent moral legitimacy to urbanists' use of the land-use weapons they did have—urban planning and construction permits—to threaten Parisian industrialists with blocked expansion and twist their arms to negotiate. (They refused new arrivals outright.)

[36] MRU, Service Foncier, note to Directeur du cabinet on "Possibilité d'une réglementation des installations industrielles dans le cadre des lois existantes," as well as draft proposals of new rules (the latest dating from November 1951), CAC 19770911/50.

[37] Gibel to M. Boway, 16 November 1950, CAC 19770911/50.

[38] They repeatedly proposed precursors of the 1955 *agrément* and the *redevance*, a special surtax later charged on all factory construction authorized in the Paris region. See the unpassed bills (projets de loi) and related correspondence of 1944-1945 in CAC 19770777/1. The key difference with the system that

negative measures: it was politically and economically unacceptable until decentralization became profitable. The Finance Ministry had made this clear in the 1930s, when it opposed blocking new war production in the capital. Such constraint could lead to "un malthusianisme économique pouvant conduire à une réduction de la production et à une gêne du secteur industriel," as well as "l'impression d'une mainmise trop marquée de l'Administration sur les industriels."[39] After the war, the Ministry of Industry voiced similar concerns.[40] Even Pierre Gibel thought that more negative power would be of limited help until positive measures came through.[41]

In sum, negative *dirigisme* alone was indeed Malthusian, but that is precisely why the MRU hesitated to use the controls it had and failed to obtain stronger ones in the early postwar years. An analogous problem arose with the broader urban containment proposed by Gravier in 1947. Until 1954, the MRU deliberately limited housing construction in the Paris region in hopes of choking off the capital's growth, but as the capital's housing crisis reached unprecedented proportions, the economic irrationality and social hardship this measure made it politically untenable.[42] Simon Nora, an economic modernizer in the cabinet of Pierre Mendès France, railed against the MRU's policy: "il est évident que ce n'est pas la crise du logement qui freinera l'exode des populations vers Paris, et on ne peut admettre que les millions de mal-logés de la région parisienne soient

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France finally got is that these early proposals did not limit their containment policy to the capital. Early postwar officials hoped to apply the same system to a broader list of congested cities. Faced with the practical and legal limits of using urban land-use controls for national development goals, the MRU made yet another unsuccessful push for an *agrément* in 1950. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 35-36. Not all planners liked the agrément idea, however: Gabriel Dessus, "Introduction à l'étude de la localisation de l'industrie," in *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels, vol. 1*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Délégation générale à l'équipement national, 1944), 20.

[39] Cited in Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 57.

[40] Bellier, director of the DIME, to Secrétaire Général, Production industrielle, ca. 1945, noting a divergence of principles with the MRU, in the dossier "Décentralisation," CAC 19830589/5.

[41] The MRU had already approved many factory expansions that it could have blocked with existing urban planning measures, Gibel explained. In these cases, "[u]n texte interdisant toute construction nouvelle de caractère industriel dans la Région Parisienne n'aurait pas changé les données du problème." "Aménagement industriel de la Région parisienne," CAC 19770911/50.

[42] Fourcaut, "Les premiers grands ensembles." After 1953, all economic modernization projects recognized the need for more low-income housing in industrializing areas in order to facilitate the regional migration of workers. See for example, "Annexes: Premières mesures d'application. Rapport au groupe de travail," July 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1.

condamnés à demeurer en cet état."[43] The MRU thus undertook an ambitious housing program which heavily privileged the Paris region, building two hundred thousand new units between 1955 and 1958 alone.[44] The FNAT itself cut spending on industrial parks in the provinces—its initial purpose—and massively shifted resources to housing construction. By 1959, the fund had lent out just 4 billion old francs for industrial parks, as compared to 35 billion for housing, thirty-five percent of it in the Paris region.[45] The political urgency of housing Parisians trumped the ideal of industrial decentralization.

In the long run, the most powerful pressure on the capital's manufacturers would come from urban redevelopment and rising land rents.[46] Here too, however, the reconstruction years were mostly a time of planning and waiting, rather than action. Until the second half of the 1950s, the long-announced "reconquête" of central Paris for elite activities struggled to get off the ground. The ferocity of debates over the capital's

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[43] "Note pour M. le Président a/s problèmes du logement," 27 October 1954, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP; "Note pour M. le Ministre sur le décret tendant à favoriser une meilleure répartition des industries sur l'ensemble du territoire," 3 December 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

[44] Fourcaut, "Les premiers grands ensembles," 207. However, as Fourcaut notes, until the Paris Region District abandoned containment in the early 1960s, government planners tried to maintain an untenable middle ground between the new policy of responding to the housing crisis and the old one of using it to strangle the capital's growth (209-212). Gravier and others tried to invent harebrained schemes to square this circle—such as mandating that new housing in the Paris region would be reserved from Parisians leaving the city center, not provincials migrating toward the capital. Gravier presentation to the CCURP, 13 March 1958, 19920405/1. An early draft of the Second Plan reiterated the MRU's logic that housing construction in Paris needed to be kept to a minimum as a disincentive to industrial growth. Projet de rapport, Deuxième Plan, CHAN 80AJ/18. So did André Prothin at the MRU (see the minutes of the CNU-Section de l'aménagement national et régional, 10 January 1956, 7-8, CAC 19770775/1) and Construction Minister Pierre Sudreau (minutes of the CIAT, 7 July 1959, 8, CAC 19770788/1). On the other hand, the Construction Ministry often predicated its decentralization agreements with manufacturers upon their reconversion of current factory land into housing. Sudreau to Randet, 24 October 1961, CAC 19770815/5.

[45] In the MRU's initial conception, the FNAT was only supposed to build housing for decentralizing industries, but the "rapport étroit établi primitivement entre zone industrielle et zone d'habitation" was broken by the more general housing crisis. The FNAT was put to work building housing everywhere—first and foremost in the Paris region, which ironically had received 35 percent of the FNAT's housing credits by 1959. In that year, 35 billion old francs had been spent on housing, only 4 billion on industrial parks. Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 113. By 1955, 14 industrial parks had been created, as opposed to 50 housing complexes, although some housing was tied to industrial decentralization operations. Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 406. The period from 1954-1956 saw a major reduction of new FNAT operations for industrial parks. "Note sur la situation financière du compte spécial 15-25 'Fonds national d'aménagement du territoire,'" 26 August 1954, CAC 19770779/8. André Prothin noted that the shift stemmed from the MRU's opinion that the surest industrial parks had already been realized, as well as the new political urgency of housing construction. Note, "Fonds national d'aménagement du territoire," 7 May 1954.

[46] Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 31-32, 86.

renovation—within the Municipal Council and between the city and the state—was matched only by the lack of resources to carry out such programs.[47]

With its ambiguous political mandate, weak subsidies, and reticence to harm businesses' bottom line, the MRU got little decentralization done in the first years after the war. Even when the SARP could have forced bombed-out factories to be rebuilt elsewhere, it generally did not—"pour ne pas apporter d'entrave à l'activité économique," as Gibel said in 1946.[48] What the planners did best in these years was antagonize Parisian interests. In 1951, André Thirion, a Gaullist municipal councilor, decried the SARP for planning deindustrialization and social dislocation in the capital.[49] As Dessus had argued, ambitious programs to displace factories like Renault and Citroën were a lightning rod for criticism without getting much done.

The MRU thus adopted Dessus' logic. Decentralization would in fact be decentralized expansion ("au moins en première étape") it proclaimed in its 1950 national plan.[50] The SARP thus turned to planning for long-term disinvestment, signing conventions which offered manufacturers approval for immediate construction while requiring them to move in the future.[51] This future was often 20 or 30 years away. Once reconstruction investments had been poured into factories, MRU officials reasoned, a transfer would remain too costly in the medium term; they thus prepared to wait for the slow attrition of Paris' revamped industrial apparatus. The conventions were of dubious legality, but the MRU officials hoped that their main effect would be to prompt

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[47] Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine*, 25-6, 263; Rémi Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne" (doctoral thesis, Ecole d'architecture Paris-Villemin, 1990), 174.

[48] Only factories that were more than seventy percent destroyed were forced to rebuild elsewhere. Few firms in the Paris region had suffered such broad destruction. "Observations sur le rapport: 'État de la question au 1 avril 1945,'" doc. 104, CAC 19770777/3; Gibel, "Note…sur les conditions pratiques que demandent, dans la situation actuelle, les projets de reconstruction et d'aménagement," 22 June 1946, MRU CAC 19770911/50.

[49] The denunciation of decentralization was politically ecumenical. Communists in turn denounced Thirion's own plan, which contained projects for a major new business district, as a deportation of the working class. Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 308.

[50] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 12.

[51] Except for Citroën, most companies were getting a deal to expand in the Paris region in exchange for their promise to decentralize in the future. Bellier, "Conférence tenue le 21/3/51 à 21h dans le cabinet de M. le Ministre de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme," CAC 19830589/5.

manufacturers to develop a long-term plan for decentralization, so that in the end legal constraint would not have to be used.[52]

After 1950, the MRU at long last began to obtain corporate agreements to do overspill expansion. Claudius-Petit's decision to jump-start *aménagement du territoire* coincided with the fact that manufacturers were increasingly running out of factory space, as French industry finally surpassed its interwar production levels.[53] Even so, the MRU's early efforts remained lamentable. Its services reviewed over 700 construction permits, but they only convinced a half-dozen large companies to create new provincial factories and got forty others to sign conventions agreeing to future decentralization.[54] A ministry report called this effort "le travail des chercheurs d'or qui triaient des tonnes de sable pour recueillir quelques pépites." It even noted, "devant ces difficultés, il y a de bons esprits pour se demander si...l'écheveau de l'industrie parisienne n'est pas si emmêlé qu'il serait trop tard pour en tirer le moindre fil."[55]

Negotiations with companies varied widely. It was easiest to refuse building permits for provincial companies that wished to move to the Paris region. The MRU presented this as a progrowth measure—and played regional interests against one another—by arguing that blocking new arrivals was necessary to give Paris' existing firms room to expand.[56] Even here, however, state control was far from airtight. Most newcomers were small businesses, which snuck into town under the MRU's radar, expanded production, and then came back looking for a regularization of their

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[52] As one note read, SARP planners engaged in the conventions "sans s'illusionner absolument sur la valeur de la pratique qu'ils sont en train d'instaurer." Letter to Mestais, July 30 1946, CAC 19770911/50. However, the contract pushed a manufacturer "à envisager dès maintenant son futur transfert: il peut rechercher des terrains en province et même y amorcer certaines branches de sa production." SARP, "Note sommaire sur le problème industriel dans la Région parisienne," December 1949, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6. On the contracts, see also Rignole and Teissedre, "Perspectives...de la décentralisation industrielle," *Documentation française*, May 1952. For an example of the conventions, see the minutes of the CARP session on Boulogne Billancourt, MRU CAC 19770911/23.

[53] SARP internal meeting, 23 October 1950, CAC 19770911/23; "Note à M. Gibel," 6 July 1950, and "Note à M. Balloul," 6 July 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82.

[54] Untitled, undated note in dossier "Généralités," CAC 19770911/50.

[55] Cited in Pierre Randet, *L'Aménagement du territoire: Genèse et étapes d'un grand dessein* (Paris: Documentation française, 1994), 66.

[56] SARP, "Note sommaire sur le problème industriel dans la Région parisienne," December 1949, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6. See also SARP internal meeting, 23 October 1950, CAC 19770911/23.

buildings.[57] At that point they had a good chance to get their request approved, because the MRU found it hard to refuse extensions for Parisian manufacturers.[58] This was especially true for smaller companies. They were harder to monitor, and the Ministry of Industry defended the idea that decentralization would mainly involve a multi-branch division of labor, which smaller companies could hardly afford.[59] The first decentralizations thus involved national corporations such as Citroën to Rennes, Gillette to Annecy, and Motobécane to Saint-Quentin.[60]

Even among these large firms, MRU officials ran into headwind; few saw the profit of decentralization in the early 1950s.[61] The negotiations also had widely divergent outcomes, giving the ministry's decisions an air of arbitrary favoritism—a problem that would continue to haunt negative controls. The big three Paris automakers are a case in point. In 1950, the MRU allowed Renault to create its vast new car assembly plant in Flins, only forty kilometers from Paris. At that point, Claudius-Petit tried to get tough.[62] Citroën, desperate for space in its outdated facilities, was among the first companies to fall into the MRU's hands; it agreed to open a plant in Rennes, giving the ministry a rare early victory. Three years later, a new minister allowed SIMCA to create a giant factory in Poissy, just a stone's throw from Flins. Yet when Citroën came looking for new permits the next year, the MRU was again taking a determined stance and again pushed it out to the provinces. Pierre Bercot, Citroën's president, was livid. A free-market ideologue who viewed state *dirigisme* and Renault's nationalization as a socialist

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[57] This problem continued after 1955. Faucheux to the minister of Construction, 10 February 1960, 19770788/1.

[58] "On ne peut songer à empêcher [l'extension des industries existantes]," the SARP reported in 1949; "une telle politique aurait pour effet de paralyser l'industrie de la Région Parisienne." SARP, "Note sommaire sur le problème industriel dans la Région parisienne," December 1949, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6. See also SARP internal meeting, 23 October 1950, CAC 19770911/23.

[59] Bellier, director of the DIME, "Permis de construire des immeubles à usage industriel dans la Région parisienne," ca. 1952, CAC 19830589/5.

[60] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport*, 34-35.

[61] Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 414-418; Randet, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 62.

[62] "J'entends constamment parler de la seule Régie Renault," Claudius-Petit railed in 1950. "Qu'a-t-on fait en ce qui concerne les autres fabricants d'automobiles ou industries similaires dans la Région Parisienne?" He decided to "aligner tous les industriels quant aux exigences auxquelles ils doivent répondre en ce qui concerne l'Urbanisme ou l'Aménagement du territoire," beginning with the Paris automakers Citroën and SIMCA. "Note à M. Gibel," 6 July 1950; "Note à M. Balloul," 6 July 1950, CHAN Claudius-Petit papers, 538AP/82.

conspiracy against his company, Bercot had no trouble viewing the MRU's inconstant rulings as pure favoritism.[63]

The number of decentralizations gradually rose in the early 1950s, but a decade after the war the MRU's record remained modest. As of June 1956, the ministry could only claim 27,000 jobs created and 34,000 more projected.[64] This result paled in comparison to the 131,000 jobs London manufacturers had created in the Depressed Areas five years earlier.[65] It also contrasted with the flight of manufacturing out of New York. The Big Apple had no dedicated decentralization policy, but as financial and real-estate interests came to control the planning process, they submitted manufacturers to more draconian land-use constraints than the MRU was able to achieve in Paris. Between 1945 and 1955 alone, redevelopment projects cost New York some 18,000 industrial jobs, and the growing scarcity of industrial space in the city was a leading cause for manufacturers' decentralization. The first cries of alarm about deindustrialization occurred in 1954, and the city lost 200,000 production jobs in the next decade.[66]

In this light, the MRU's efforts were timid indeed. France lacked the political will to force rapid decentralization, as British officials had done in the 1940s; Parisian manufacturers could appeal to a national planning authority to obtain industrial space, unlike their counterparts in New York. Men like Gravier and Gibel certainly attracted attention—and stoked criticism—by demanding rapid deindustrialization. In reality, however, they governed over a restoration of Parisian production which would keep the capital's industrial workforce expanding into the 1960s. Plenty of observers found the MRU's program negative, even Malthusian, but that is precisely why it got nowhere.

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[63] Pierre Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën: Document privé* (Paris: La Pensée universelle, 1977), 57-58. Jean-Louis Loubet writes, "Bercot mène une bataille, celle de l'entreprise face à l'État et à la Régie Renault qui rassemble tous les maux...'la mise en place d'une arme tactique dans l'offensive du socialisme.'" Jean-Louis Loubet, "Pierre Bercot," in *Dictionnaire historique des patrons français*, ed. Jean-Claude Daumas (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 76.

[64] Randet, "Décentralisation et localisation industrielles," ca. 1956, 16, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 3.1; Girault, "Désindustrialisation de la banlieue," 354-356.

[65] Scott, "Dispersion Versus Decentralization," 583; Martin and Rowthorn, eds., *The Geography of Deindustrialization*, 62. London and New York were common benchmarks for Paris. See for example Gravier's presentation on growth rates to the Comité des plans régionaux, 18 December 1962, 9, CAC 19930278/7.

[66] Joshua Freeman, *Working-Class New York: Life and Labor Since World War II* (New York: New Press, 2000), 143, 149-150.

Without a clear economic and political imperative for change, urban planners remained a weak counterbalance to business interests and the government mandate to restore growth.

2. Growth and Decline: the Impact of 1955

When government planners finally obtained a carrot-and-stick decentralization policy in 1954-1955, it was in a very different context than they had imagined a decade earlier. Rather than a gradual reduction in the Paris region's population, planners now faced a renewed polarization of national growth around the capital, which sent the Paris region's industrial workforce and the demographic influx soaring. Jean Faucheux, the head of decentralization at the Construction Ministry (ex-MRU), confessed "une certaine impression d'impuissance, celle que doit ressentir le naufragé réduit à écoper d'une main l'eau qui envahit la chaloupe et à boucher de l'autre de multiples voies d'eau."[67] This metropolitan explosion was a clear defeat for *aménagement du territoire*, but it finally set the stage for a vigorous decentralization policy. Moving production now had an immediate role to play in fueling national growth and permitting Paris' redevelopment, while muting the dangers of deindustrialization to the region's workers.

A range of administration officials began to see Paris as a block on national expansion in the early 1950s, for two main reasons. The first was the nation's labor imbalance. French industry hit a stunning stride—creating 350,000 new jobs between 1954 and 1957 alone—even as the Algerian war drained off hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen for military service and slowed immigration.[68] Such trends would have strained the labor market under any circumstances, but they were aggravated by regional polarization. The job offer fell behind demand in much of the provinces, while Parisian manufacturers began complaining of a severe labor shortage—first for specialists, then for workers of all kind.[69] By 1955, government planners feared this imbalance would soon put a ceiling on national growth.[70]

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[67] Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 190.
[68] Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français: Le cas de la région de Caen, 1950-1980" (doctoral thesis, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, 1982), 23.
[69] Ibid., 23,33. On the Chamber of Commerce's labor worries, see "Réunion du 18 juin 1957 dans le cabinet de M. Pelletier," CAC 19770784/2.
[70] Nora, "Note de conjoncture," 4 January 1955, 2-4, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1; Jean (aka "Jacques de Vernon") Saint-Geours, "Bilan de la politique de reconversion," *Cahiers de la République* (1957).

In this context, redistributing jobs became a Keynesian economic policy, simultaneously fighting provincial unemployment and easing the inflationist pressures on Paris' labor market. The administration's economic modernizers—men like Simon Nora and Jean Saint-Geours—declared that decentralization was the only way to accelerate the flight of French workers from unproductive farms and shops to expanding industries. Too many provincial Frenchmen remained tied to their hometowns for regional migration to rapidly solve the imbalance; in any case, Paris' housing shortage was an obstacle to a further influx of workers from declining areas. The only rapid solution was thus to bring new factories to workers.[71] In 1957, Jean Saint-Geours underscored the importance of solving Paris' labor woes in justifying decentralization policy. Provincial unemployment had essentially disappeared, Saint-Geours wrote, but moving production to the provinces was more necessary than ever in a context of rapid expansion: it remained the only way to fully mobilize France's rural labor reserve.[72] If decentralization in this version had a clear progrowth purpose, it still sought to douse the power of Parisian workers. The new commissioner for the Paris region, Pierre Sudreau, pushed decentralization as a way to end the "surenchère sur les salaires" in the capital's industry, which he blamed for national price inflation.[73]

The second reason for the broader government interest in decentralization was that the state could no longer ignore renovation in the capital. Without some way to slow job growth and displace factories, urban improvement was an impossible task. This was true for urgent social infrastructure. Simon Nora told the prime minister that a negative control on industrial construction was a precondition for solving the inhumane housing

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[71] "Note de conjoncture," 4 January 1955, 2-4, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1; "Arguments en faveur du décret 'Tendant à favoriser une meilleure répartition des industries sur l'ensemble du territoire,'" undated, and "Note pour M. le Ministre sur le décret tendant à favoriser une meilleure répartition des industries sur l'ensemble du territoire," 3 December 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

[72] Saint-Geours, "Bilan de la politique de reconversion," 211.

[73] "Un cri d'alarme de M. Sudreau," *La Nouvelle République du Centre Ouest*, 16 May 1957. Sudreau also requested that the minimum wage (SMIG) be tied to national consumer prices, not Paris region consumer prices—another way to drive down workers' wages. Presentation to CIAT 27 November 1959, 19770788/1. Similarly, in Britain and Italy the turn to a strong regional policy was a reaction to workers' power to drive wages upwards in an overheated core region. Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 63-64, 240.

situation.[74] Moving production was all the more necessary for redeveloping Paris proper into a world-class city. This project finally got underway in 1955, with the naming of Pierre Sudreau as commissioner for the Paris region (commissaire à la Construction et à l'Urbanisme pour la Région Parisienne). Things accelerated after 1961, as the Paris Region District, a powerful metropolitan agency run by Paul Delouvrier, renounced containment policy for a program of regional expansion and world city prestige.[75] Much opposed Sudreau and Delouvrier's approaches to planning, but one thing they had in common was displacing manufacturing from Paris and its most strategic inner suburbs to make room for residential construction, tertiary growth, and elite business, political, and cultural functions. The 1960 regional plan called this deliberate segregation the "cleaning out" (*curettage*) of the capital's population and activities.[76]

Land and labor shortages were a powerful incentive for manufacturers to move to the provinces, but the continued concentration of industry in the Paris region showed that only the state could orchestrate a rapid transfer of production.[77] SIMCA's move to in Poissy, a few dozen kilometers from Paris, spectacularly underscored the insufficiency of a market solution.[78] In 1954, the automaker came to the MRU in desperate need of space and signed an agreement to build a new plant in Amiens—whose declining textiles industry was laying off workers—in return for modest building permits in the Paris

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[74] "Note pour M. le Président a/s problèmes du logement," 27 October 1954, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP; "Note pour M. le Ministre sur le décret tendant à favoriser une meilleure répartition des industries sur l'ensemble du territoire," 3 December 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

[75] This paradigm shift was consecrated in the 1965 plan for the Paris region, the Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région parisienne (SDAURP). A useful English-language discussion of the 1960s debates on Paris in context of national *aménagement du territoire* can be found in Niles M. Hansen, *French Regional Planning* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 38-54, 222. Savitch makes the argument that Delouvrier's policies created more region-wide growth between the late 1960s and early 1980s than authorities in either London (with its more stringent containment policy) or New York (with its polarization between fantastic growth in Manhattan and decline in the other inner boroughs). H. V. Savitch, *Post-Industrial Cities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 124, 152, 293-295. An exhaustive account of Paris region planning can be found in Michel Carmona, *Le Grand Paris: L'évolution de l'idée d'aménagement de la Région parisienne* (Bagneux: Girotypo, 1979).

[76] Plan d'aménagement et d'organisation générale de la région parisienne (PADOG), cited in Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine*, 83-86, 199; Savitch, *Post-Industrial Cities*, 113-116.

[77] Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 125-126.

[78] Ford's own building of a factory on the site in the 1930s had elicited strong opposition and received "des avis unanimement défavorable" from both the CSAOGRP and the commission for the decentralization of war industries. (Their decision was promptly reversed by the Ministry of War). Prothin, "Note d'information relative aux projets d'extension de la Société SIMCA à Poissy," 14 September 1954, CAC 19770911/55.

region. When Ford put its Poissy factory up for sale just a few months later, however, SIMCA saw an opportunity to outmaneuver the planners. It bought the Ford site, drew up plans to expand it into a vast assembly plant, and in October 1954 got the project approved by the ministers of Housing (ex-MRU) and Industry. This was a back-door deal that bypassed both ministries' services, the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP), and even the prime minister—all hostile to the plan.[79]

The Poissy deal caused an outpouring of criticism. SIMCA's program left Amiens high and dry—its chamber of commerce had already invested in an industrial park to house the automaker—while placing a vast industrial site in Paris' back yard. In terms of square footage, the Poissy project equaled three-quarters of all the new factory space approved in France in 1953, and more than all decentralization operations to date.[80] Just before the project went through, an adviser thus warned Prime Minister Mendès France, "Un permis de construire concernant la plus vaste extension industrielle projetée depuis la guerre dans l'agglomération parisienne placerait le gouvernement dans une position ridicule...alors que le Président du Conseil a proclamé sa volonté de faire entrer [la] décentralisation dans les faits."[81]

This was exactly what happened. For many observers, SIMCA epitomized multinational corporations' ability to flaunt government policy.[82] In reality, the automaker owed its success to the fact that the deal pleased several other constituencies.

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[79] On the ensemble of the SIMCA-Poissy affair, see Jean-Louis Loubet and Nicolas Hatzfeld, *Les Sept vies de Poissy* (Boulogne: ETAI, 2001), 81-90.

[80] These two notes have different figures, although both agreed that SIMCA would be a monsterous percentage of French industrial construction. Eugène Claudius-Petit, "Note à l'attention de M. Benard," 18 December 1954, CHAN 538AP/100; Prothin, "Note d'information relative aux projets d'extension de la Société SIMCA à Poissy," 14 September 1954, CAC 19770911/55. The SIMCA construction single-handedly created an upward spike in government authorizations for new factory space in 1955: "Note à M. Prothin," 11 November 1956, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 3.1.

[81] And: "Si le permis de construire à Poissy est accordé, ce n'est plus la peine de parler d'aménager le territoire, de déconcentrer la région parisienne, de redonner de la vie aux régions." "Note a/s de la SIMCA," undated, and "Note a/s de la SIMCA," 15 October 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1, dossier SIMCA.

[82] The SIMCA deal seemed to confirm, as Jean Lojkine wrote two decades later, "que la grande industrie de la mécanique et de la construction électrique, loin d'avoir 'subi' la politique de décentralisation, l'a au contraire utilisée pour accroître encore sa suprématie et accélérer sa concentration." In the case of both Renault's 1950 installation at Flins and SIMCA's at Poissy, it was the companies' own growth that led to their decentralized extension. Moreover, their choice of location married their desire to remain as close as possible to Paris while seizing available land opportunities and new labor pools for their increasingly standardized production. Both cases, Lojkine concludes, "nous montre[nt] qu'en réalité le Pouvoir d'État n'a nullement contrarié le mouvement spontané de ces firmes, ce en contradiction flagrante avec les objectifs officiels de l'Aménagement du territoire." Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine*, 17-18, 25.

Poissy's mayor and the prefect of Seine-et-Oise both fought to win the factory. From an industrial perspective, by buying out Ford, SIMCA was eliminating an American competitor from the French auto market and fulfilling the government's goal of corporate concentration in the industry. And even the MRU's planners were pleased that SIMCA would finally transfer its existing factories out of Paris and the inner suburbs.[83]

Nonetheless, the Poissy deal seemed to prove that urban pressures, labor shortages, and new possibilities for multi-branch production would never suffice to wean manufacturers off of their dependency on the capital. By setting up shop so close to Renault's Flins factory, SIMCA was prepared to brave intense labor competition. It did so with the knowledge that it could turn to provincial and foreign immigration—even as Amiens' textile workers remained unemployed—and that the state would fund the urbanization required to accommodate this new workforce. The prime minister's cabinet estimated that the cost of new urbanization and housing for Poissy's workers would total 25-30 billion francs; in addition, transporting employees to the plant would aggravate the deficit of the SNCF's regional rail lines. In sum, SIMCA epitomized the idea that manufacturers continued to "s'étendre dans la région parisienne pour rejeter plus facilement sur les collectivités publiques les charges financières résultant du logement et du transport de son personnel."[84]

The Poissy affair took decentralization policy to a new low, but in doing so it paved the way for the negative control of factory construction that planners had been

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[83] See the mayor's note to the ministry of Housing on 29 October 1954 and Gibel's note of 22 July 1954, in CAC 19770911/55). SIMCA agreed to essentially withdraw from the inner Paris suburbs, rapidly evacuating smaller sites in Puteaux, Suresnes, and Saint Denis, but only handing over its main plant in Nanterre by 1973. It also agreed to create two small factories in provincial towns suffering from unemployment, and foot the bill for half of a substantial housing program in Poissy (the state would pay for the other half). Gibel, the cabinet of Prime Minister Mendès-France, and the CGP's Chartier all admitted that it was difficult to refuse a regrouping of SIMCA's light car production on the Poissy site—indeed, liberating land closer to Paris was a tempting opportunity—but demanded that much stiffer counterparts be imposed (such as a quicker liberation of the Nanterre site and a transfer of truck production to Amiens). See "Note pour le Président," 24 November 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1, dossier SIMCA; "Réunion du 24 juillet 1954," CAC 19770911/55; Loubet and Hatzfeld, *Les Sept vies de Poissy*, 81, 89-90.

[84] "Note a/s de la SIMCA," 15 October 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1, dossier SIMCA. The SIMCA project would require "[s]oit le transport quotidien vers Poissy de 7,000 ouvrier...et un besoin supplémentaire de 2,500 logements, soit la construction à Poissy d'une ville nouvelle de 40,000 habitants," according to "Note pour le Président," 24 November 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 1, dossier SIMCA. In the end, the administration required SIMCA to make a major contribution toward housing and infrastructure in the Poissy area. Ibid., 90.

demanding since the 1920s. Pierre Gibel told the minister of Housing that if the SIMCA deal went through, he would no longer be able to maintain pressure on Parisian industry: other manufacturers, including those who had already agreed to decentralize, would demand to construction permits in the capital.[85] The prime minister's cabinet agreed.[86] After last-minute resistance, in January 1955, the government thus approved an administrative control on new factory construction, popularly known as the *agrément*.[87]

The *agrément* soon gave rise to two opposing myths: that it was an anti-economic block on national growth and, on the contrary, that it gave the government credit for decentralization which manufacturers would have undertaken of their own accord. The policy's creation told a different story. The administration only approved such exceptional *dirigisme* when even economic modernizers—at the CGP and the Ministry of Industry—believed the national costs of regional polarization had come to outweigh the production concerns of individual manufacturers. And SIMCA seemed to prove beyond a doubt that market pressures alone were incapable of stopping the continued concentration of French manufacturing.

Parisian politicians immediately attacked the *agrément*. In 1956, Antoine Quinson, an MP for the industrial suburbs to the northeast of Paris, introduced a bill to repeal the measure. Quinson denounced negative controls as a "déportation des usines" and a source of "déplacements de main-d'œuvre qui n'a pas été consultée," as well as an affront to business freedom and a threat to municipal tax bases.[88] The Economic Council replied with the overspill argument pioneered by Gabriel Dessus. The government's policy, it said, "does not aim at decentralization in the proper sense of the word, but

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[85] Gibel wrote, "il ne me paraît pas possible, en ce qui me concerne, de maintenir les positions de principe qui avaient été prises dans les discussions antérieures." Gibel, "Note à M. le Directeur général de l'aménagement du territoire," ca. 1954, CAC 19770911/51.

[86] Approving the *agrément* was urgent, one cabinet note insisted, "pour affirmer la volonté d'action du gouvernement en ce domaine, dont l'affaire SIMCA a fait douter." "Note pour M. le President," Nov 2, 1954, and "Note pour M. le Président," Dec 3 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4. Even the Minister of Industry came around to this logic—so long as the *agrément*'s implementation was delayed until the SIMCA transfer got underway.

[87] Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 55.

[88] Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique des économies régionales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 163-164. Paris' Chamber of Commerce complained to the MRU that the measure was anti-economical and unfairly targeted industry, in a note of 28 October 1959, CAC 19770815/4. A 1949 review of the MRU's efforts noted that only "une ou deux communes" in the Paris region did not fight to keep their existing factories, which were so important to local tax revenues. SARP, "Note sommaire sur le problème industriel dans la Région parisienne," December 1949, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6.

simply seeks to limit the growth of certain companies." It therefore had "no negative consequences" for the capital's job market.[89] This did not remove the complaint that government planning was an attack on working-class Paris. A few years later, a Communist politician likewise denounced the government's 1960 regional plan as "the deindustrialization of Paris to the profit of business, offices, and residences for the wealthy classes." The plan would "unhinge" the capital's economy and uproot its blue-collar population.[90] All the same, it seems likely that the vigorous growth of the 1950s and 1960s tempered the idea that decentralization menaced Paris' role as a manufacturing region.

In many respects, the overspill discourse was an accurate description of the situation in the 1950s. When the Economic Council ruled against Quinson's repeal effort in 1956, the MRU had not managed to transfer any major factory to the provinces; five years later, eighty percent of transferred factories still moved less than fifteen kilometers from their original site.[91] Decentralization mostly remained overspill growth. That was especially true for the rapidly expanding sectors that provided the bulk of new provincial jobs. Cars, electronics, and aviation created provincial plants with alacrity while maintaining giant Parisian workforces; each industry still had well over half of its workers in the capital as of 1966.[92] As such, the Paris region's industrial workforce continued to grow, hitting its historic peak in 1962, even as decentralization itself climbed to record levels: just 56 operations recorded between 1946 and 1954, but 530 between 1954 and 1960, and an all-time annual high of over 250 in 1962.[93] It was not unreasonable to believe that decentralization policy could indeed benefit the provinces without hurting Paris.[94]

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[89] Ibid.
[90] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 308-310, 325-326; Elsa Martayan, "Contenir ou moderniser la capitale?" *Annales de la recherche urbaine* (1991): 87-92.
[91] Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 56.
[92] Hugh Clout, *The Geography of Postwar France: A Social and Economic Approach* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1972), 60. Companies undertook the entire range of combinations of new creations, transfers, and reuse of existing buildings; these strategies varied heavily by firm size and branch. Pierre Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle de la région parisienne: Bilan et aspects (1950-1964)" (doctoral thesis, Université Paris 10, 1969), 30-31, 69; Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 79-80.
[93] Beaujeu-Garnier, *Atlas et géographie de Paris*, 32, 34; Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 51.
[94] PADOG annex on activités en Région parisienne, CAC 19770814/3; Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 7, 86.

Part of the reason for continued growth was that, true to their word, government planners continued to subordinate decentralization to a respect for business logics and economic expansion. The application of negative controls remained flexible, to not say lax. By the end of 1961, only twenty-three percent of applicants had seen their demand for new building permits refused outright.[95] State authorities recorded 1,510 decentralization operations between 1955 and 1964, but the Decentralization Committee also granted 3,654 *agréments*, and the Paris region marked a net gain of more than 5 million square meters of industrial space.[96] The committee was especially favorable to applications coming from small firms, subcontractors, and internationally competitive sectors, as well as for production that required lots of skilled labor. Decentralization thus overwhelmingly concerned large manufacturers who could afford to move split off assembly lines in new branch plants.[97] In the early 1960s, the Paris Region District further increased the number of approvals, and its progrowth plan led many manufacturers to trim back their decentralization programs in expectation of obtaining future building permits.[98]

Yet the idea that decentralization policy promoted overspill growth was also profoundly misleading, even disingenuous. The roots of the Paris region's future blue-collar decline were established in these years of seemingly unstoppable expansion. Major firms began programming the obsolescence of their original sites. State planners doggedly pursued them to move factories out of the central Paris region, even creating a new subsidy for the destruction of industrial space in the capital in 1960.[99] And as urban

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[95] Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 56.

[96] In the metallurgy sector, the only department where decentralization outweighed new growth was Paris. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 141-142.

[97] DIME note to services, 14 April 1956, CAC 19771522/159; Jean Faucheux presentation to CNU-SAT, 7 May 1956, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.1.

[98] Pierre Randet to Philippe Lamour, December 1963 on the first report of the CNAT, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 6.8; and for a longer period, Pierre Durand, *Industrie et régions: L'aménagement industriel du territoire* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1972), 99.

[99] See for example, CCURP, "mesures qui pourraient être prises pour freiner la concentration démographique dans la Région parisienne," ca. 1957-1958, 19770788/9; Groupe de travail pour la décentralisation industrielle et administrative, minutes of 7 July, CAC 19770788/1. Gravier continued to call for the decentralization of the Paris region car factories and the elimination of some 250,000 industrial jobs in the capital—a figure that proved remarkably close to the final tally. Jean-François Gravier, "La décentralisation, condition préalable de l'équipement urbain," undated but after 1955, 19920405/1. The MRU even wanted to create a "Société de décentralisation de la Région parisienne" to help manufacturers undertake such factory transfers. Randet, "Mémento d'un entretien," 6 May 1959, CAC 19770788/9.

renovation accelerated in the capital in the 1960s, the number of transfers provoked by government planners and funded by decentralization subsidies rapidly increased.[100]

Transfers to the provinces led to large numbers of layoffs in Paris: up to 90,000 by 1964.[101] Reformers' initial justification for decentralization—that it would provide Parisian workers with better living conditions in the provinces—was both naive and cynical. Dessus' wartime studies made it clear that few workers followed their jobs to the provinces and that, in these conditions, paying manufacturers to move would amount to subsidizing blue-collar layoffs. Postwar decentralization soon confirmed this rule of thumb. Companies only offered Parisian pay and other incentives to the small elite of managers, engineers, and specialist workers they needed to supervise new branch plants. Theoretically, the rank-and-file had the right to follow, but only if they accepted worse salaries and working conditions. Moving production to the provinces was a way for employers to trade their workforce for cheaper, unskilled labor in the provinces, not provide garden living for Parisians.[102]

Planners' argued that laid-off workers could easily find new jobs in the capital's booming economy.[103] This was far from true even when the Paris region's industrial job levels were near their historic peak. A 1965 study found that a quarter of workers who lost their job to provincial decentralization remained unemployed between one and two years later. Half of the workers who had found new employment thought their situation was worse than in their old jobs, due to some mix of demotions and lost benefits, lower salaries, harder work conditions, and longer commutes. Many former workers did not have the skills necessary for the new industrial and service jobs that were being created

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[100] Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 48, 51, 186; Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 30. Planners continued to promote choking off industrial labor and land, since shortages in these areas remained two of the main incentives for industrialists to decentralize. Minutes of the CNU-Section de l'aménagement national et régional, 10 January 1956, 8-9, CAC 19770775/1.

[101] In 1964, 90,000 jobs represented seven percent of the region's industrial job base. On the other hand, only one percent of Paris manufacturers had done any decentralization at that date. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 22, 186; Bastié, *Géographie du Grand Paris*, 84.

[102] Only about fifteen percent of employees decentralized with their factory between 1950 and 1964, according to a government report; Bastié estimates only eight to ten percent in the three decades of decentralization. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 186; Bastié, *Géographie du Grand Paris*, 84. Rank-and-file workers represented a small fraction of these transfers. Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 82.

[103] Pierre Durand, "Les transferts d'activité et l'aménagement du territoire," in *Aménagement du territoire et développement régional: Les faits, les idées, les institutions, vol. 8* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1977), 29.

around Paris. Older, injured, and immigrant workers were particularly affected by the difficulties of reconversion.[104]

If decentralization policy undercut Parisian workers, it did not harm the capital's economic power. On the contrary, moving factories freed up space for the tasks of designing, financing, and commanding the nation's development. This "metropolitanization" occurred in industry itself. All but the smallest manufacturers kept their headquarters, research, and administrative functions in Paris when they transferred production, reinforcing the capital's control over provincial economies and its concentration of high-quality jobs. As of 1964, two-thirds of the square footage liberated in the Paris region by state-subsidized decentralization had been reconverted for these higher-skill industrial functions. As such, decentralization did not so much deindustrialize the capital as restructure industry in ways that bolstered Paris' national and international clout.[105]

Moreover, decentralization created what was in essence a vast industrial metropolis around the capital. Since new branch plants often remained dependent on corporate headquarters, the most intensive decentralization took place within driving distance of Paris. Over half of all decentralization jobs were located within two hundred kilometers of the capital as of 1966.[106] This was a continuation of manufacturing's century-long deconcentration from the capital, first into the *banlieues* and then along transportation axes in surrounding rural departments, not the revolution of industrial geography initially expected from cheap transportation and telecommunications.[107]

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[104] Layoffs and their consequences varied a great deal. Since there were no state provisions, severance packages varied according to collective negotiations and firm strategies. Workers' experiences of unemployment and finding new work in the Paris region were heavily impacted by their age, health, and skill level. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 143-167. See also the articles on transfers in *Aménagement du territoire et développement régional: les faits, les idées, les institutions*, vol. 8 (Paris: La Documentation française, 1977).

[105] Only 32 percent of sites affected by decentralization whose reuse was known lost all their industrial activity. Others were sold off to other industrial firms, kept their original production use, or were converted to industrial tertiary functions (the latter counting for 40 percent of the total). Ibid., 125-133. In the following years, industrial headquarters and design facilities increasingly migrated to the inner suburbs, but only a fraction ever left for the provinces. On the reconversion of industrial space for office space, see Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 30. For a later period, see Jacques Malézieux, "Des usines en Ile-de-France: regards géographiques," in *L'Usine dans l'espace francilien*, ed. Martine Tabeaud, Richard Conte, and Yann Toma (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001), 48-59.

[106] Clout, *The Geography of Postwar France*, 60.

[107] Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 33.

Expanding the outer limits of decentralization was an endless goal of state planners. They refused subsidies, considered expanding the *agrément*, and even denied housing and other necessary infrastructure in the two hundred kilometers around Paris in hopes of convincing manufacturers to move further out. But such tough measures simply slowed decentralization, as manufacturers who felt tied to the capital simply gave up on their projects and stayed put. The tension between developing peripheral regions and liberating central Paris from its factories was the source of endless back-and-forth within the administration.[108] The Paris Region District finally settled the matter, planning modern factory space in the region's outer suburbs in order to accelerate the displacement of manufacturers.[109] The government's new agency for *aménagement du territoire*, the Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale (DATAR), had little option but to respond in kind. It set out to organize the regions immediately surrounding the Paris region—centered on cities like Reims, Amiens, and Le Havre—into a mighty manufacturing hinterland capable of absorbing short-distance overspill.[110]

Provincial politicians and their allies in the administration endlessly demanded a stronger application of the *agrément*, in order to improve the number, quality, and geography of decentralization jobs.[111] In each case, however, government authorities faced the same conundrums. Provincial development and freeing Paris of its factories only partly overlapped; too much *dirigisme* fueled criticism that decentralization was a Malthusian interference with business logics.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of France's negative planning controls, however, is that they got approved in the first place. The Hexagon was the only other

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[108] A report from the Secrétariat d'État aux Affaires économiques noted that "les critiques les plus nombreuses" concerning decentralization policy were on the administration's refusal to help firms that wanted to stay within two hundred kilometers of the capital. The note pushed for facilitating such moves, because they were "la première chance sinon l'unique chance de la décongestion industrielle de l'agglomération parisienne." Untitled, undated report in response to minister of Finances request of 20 February 1958, CAEF B/45774. On the debates within the administration, see IGEN, "Rapport sur la mise en oeuvre de la politique d'action régionale," 11 April 1958, CAEF B/16207; Jean Faucheux to Philippe Lamour on the first draft of the Plan d'aménagement du territoire, 22 December 1961, CAC 19770788/1.

[109] Pierre Merlin, *L'Aménagement de la région parisienne et les villes nouvelles* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1982), 55, 61.

[110] This group of regions was known as the "Bassin parisien." See the "Livre blanc du Bassin parisien," CIAT minutes of 30 July 1970, CAC 19860219; Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 222.

[111] See for instance Jules Prod'homme, copy to Sudreau of speech before joint session of Fifth and Sixth Economic Regions, 25 June 1956, CAC 19930278/19; Sudreau report, transmitted by Pelletier, préfet de la Seine, to Secrétaire d'État à la Reconstruction et au Logement, 11 October 1956, CAC 19920405/1.

nation besides Britain to boast such a negative decentralization tool.[112] And the fact that the *agrément* was one of the first measures planners demanded in the 1920s but one of the last ones they got showed that despite the apparent success of Gravier's themes, it remained hard to justify a policy that smacked of overbearing *dirigisme* and a state-led attack on working-class Paris. A dozen years of tremendous expansion in the capital, extreme polarization of French growth, and a sense of imminent national crisis were crucial for finally seeing it through. The 1955 legislation approved a decentralization policy first invented during the Communist scare of the 1920s and they helped set blue-collar Paris on a downward track in less than a decade, but the implementation of industrial containment cannot be understood without this final phase of seemingly unstoppable growth in industrial Paris.

3. Renault: the "Prototype" of Decentralization

In 1945, Gabriel Dessus called Renault the "prototype" of French decentralization.[113] The three following decades proved him right. Attempts to displace the massive auto works from Boulogne-Billancourt, just outside the western gates of Paris, combined the extremes of postwar decentralization policy. Between 1942 and 1950, Billancourt was the target of the most radical projects for deindustrializing Paris, as administration and company officials planned to kick Renault's factories and its radicalized workers out to the provinces. The reality turned out to be just the opposite. As decentralization got delayed and reconstruction investments were funneled into the existing site, Billancourt soon regained its status as the nation's largest factory. The nationalized automaker became a leader of decentralized expansion—creating tens of thousands of jobs in new provincial plants—but with postwar demand soaring, urban planners were unable to reduce Billancourt's workforce.[114] Three decades after the initial

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[112] They were the only two countries to adopt the measure. Bernard Dézert and Christian Verlaque, *L'Espace industriel* (Paris: Masson, 1978), 158.
[113] CEGOS, "La Décentralisation industrielle," *Reconstruction et Industrie* (12-16 November, 1945): 98.
[114] Nicolas Hatzfeld et al., "Renault-Billancourt," in *Mémoires du travail à Paris: Faubourg des métallos, Austerlitz-Salpêtrière, Renault-Billancourt*, ed. Christian Chevandier and Michel Pigenet (Paris: Creaphis Editions, 2008), 284. More generally, automakers were at the "overspill" expansion extreme of French decentralization. In the first decade of the policy, their decentralizations created more provincial jobs than any other sector, without substantially reducing Paris region plants and job levels. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 90.

government plans for Renault's removal, France's "worker fortress" thus remained near its historic heights, just outside the gates of Paris.

The Renault project highlights the degree to which the anti-urban fears of war, working-class radicalism, and the social ills of city living drove early decentralization efforts. The immediate impetus for government plans to displace Billancourt came from four wartime bombings of the factory, but the project quickly became the *causus belli* of politicians and experts looking to make a social and political statement out of decentralization. They could not have found a more auspicious target. Between the 1910s and the 1930s, Louis Renault came to epitomize the ills of urban Fordism, engaging in a ruthless "conquest" of the land around his early workshops. Property owners and residents denounced this urban imperialism, but judges and city administrators were either unable or unwilling to stop it. Renault engulfed public streets, pressured residents to sell their land, and took over the bulk of the Ile Séguin Island, made famous by his Taylorized factory.[115] Renault's postwar president, Pierre Lefaucheux, himself recognized that "Renault a fait disparaître l'un des plus beaux sites de l'Ouest parisien. Nous traînons les erreurs du passé."[116]

Beginning with the 1936 strikes, Billancourt became the symbolic center of France's working-class movement, a transformation completed with the nationalization of the company in 1944. As historian Jean-Louis Loubet puts it, Billancourt was the nation's "forteresse ouvrière, porte-drapeau des luttes syndicales en France," and bastion of the Communist-linked union Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT).[117] It also symbolized the urban underpinnings of labor radicalism. The factory concentrated up to 38,000 workers, many of whom were recent migrants of provincial or foreign origin.[118] Pierre Lefaucheux denounced Billancourt as "un lieu de mécontentement ouvrier." Its

[115]Hatzfeld et al., "Renault-Billancourt," 280-281; Patrick Fridenson, "Les usines Renault et la banlieue (1919-1952)," in *Banlieue rouge, 1920-1960: Années Thorez, années Gabin, archétype du populaire, banc d'essai des modernités*, ed. Annie Fourcaut (Paris: Autrement, 1992), 127-130.
[116] Jean-Louis Loubet, Nicolas Hatzfeld, and Alain Michel, *Ile Seguin: Des Renault et des hommes* (Paris: ETAI, 2004), 166.
[117] The site, as Patrick Fridenson writes, became the "symbol of an era." Fridenson, "Les Usines Renault," 137; Jean-Louis Loubet, *Renault: Histoire d'une entreprise* (Paris: ETAI, 2000), 269.
[118] Hatzfeld et al., "Renault-Billancourt," 280-281; Fridenson, "Les Usines Renault," 127-130.

poor mix of "ateliers imbriqués, air malsain, espaces verts insuffisants," were only matched by its chronic lack of good housing for workers and their families.[119]

The idea of decentralizing Billancourt attracted widespread support, but it repeatedly ran aground on the problem highlighted by Dessus: transferring factories and workers disrupted production and cost considerable sums to firms and state agencies. Vichy's president, Philippe Pétain, personally sponsored the movement to kick Renault out of Billancourt, and a series of meetings at the Seine Prefecture came up with four possible strategies for razing the Renault factories.[120] Pierre Laval, however, persuaded Pétain to delay decentralization projects until war's end.[121] Laval wrote that although it was "regrettable que des usines aussi importantes aient pu s'édifier aux portes mêmes de Paris, à l'encontre de toutes les règles d'hygiène et de politique sociale," there were too many arguments against an immediate transfer. The move would throw thousands of personnel out of work, undermine Boulogne's economy, and "compromettre à tout jamais un ensemble industriel hors de pair." In any case, Laval noted, "nous n'avons ni le temps, ni les matériaux, ni les moyens." Renault needed to be rebuilt, even if that meant Paris would be "exposé à de nouvelles destructions."[122]

Pétain's Republican successors had a similar experience. In 1945, the rapid deindustrialization of Billancourt was supported by all three men at the helms of decentralization policy: Raoul Dautry, Pierre Gibel, and Jean-François Gravier, briefly in charge of industrial decentralization at the MRU.[123] Gravier hailed the "transfert du bloc

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[119] Lefaucheux expounded on Billancourt's role in producing worker discontent at a conference on decentralization: "Les besoin humains et économiques nés de la création des usines de Billancourt n'ayant pas été satisfaits, il était normal qu'une réaction se produisît et, de même qu'un organisme humain irrité réagit par une élévation de température générale ou des inflammations locales, la réaction de l'organisme 'Billancourt' a pris des formes très variés: naissance à Billancourt d'une atmosphère permanente de mécontentement; les populations ouvrières concentrées dans un espace trop étroit et peu accueillant ayant tendance à considérer leur lieu de travail comme un 'bagne'; réaction des familles obligées de trouver elles-mêmes...des logements rarement satisfaisants..." CEGOS, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 18. See also Loubet, Hatzfeld, and Michel, *Ile Seguin*, 166; Loubet, *Renault*, 113-116.

[120] Three of the strategies involved the total elimination of production at Billancourt; the fourth envisioned the maintenance of a smaller light car division on the site. Loubet, Hatzfeld, and Michel, *Ile Seguin*, 164.

[121] Laval to DGEN Délégué général à l'Équipement nationall, 18 May 1943, and Pétain to Laval, 4 June 1943, CHAN F60/379; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 64.

[122] Laval to Renault, 23 April 1943, Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/141.

[123] Assemblée consultative: Commission de l'équipement national, minutes of 17 January 1945, audition of Dautry, Raoul Dautry archives, CHAN 307AP/167; Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne," 153. The government-controlled commission for land-use planning in the Paris region, the Comité d'aménagement de la région parisienne, planned industry out of the cities where Renault's factories were located. By July 1944 the new Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism was writing Renault to cite it for

industriel le plus considérable qui existe en France," along with the "émigration d'au moins cent mille personnes [workers' families included] hors de la capitale." This was exactly the "choc psychologique" that France needed as it entered postwar reconstruction.[124]

The planners had an auspicious context. The government had nationalized the automaker—in part due to Louis Renault's infuriating reconstruction of Billancourt during the war, which provoked repeated Allied bombings of Boulogne.[125] Pierre Lefaucheux, the president of the new Régie Nationale des Usines Renault (RNUR), seemed even more enthusiastic about decentralization than the MRU. During his speech to employees on November 10, 1944, Lefaucheux proclaimed his desire to decentralize certain units

> vers les espaces libres où nous pourrons ensemble faire du neuf et du beau en construisant tout à la fois des installations industrielles où vous pourrez travailler dans la lumière, et des cités où vous pourrez vivre et élever des enfants dans l'air pur, le soleil et la santé.[126]

Lefaucheux also called on the government to take "revolutionary" decentralization measures. After all, it was "l'État qui a laissé, pendant 40 ans, se constituer peu à peu le bloc industriel de Billancourt."[127]

A desire to quickly restart Renault's production soon led Lefaucheux to argue that the government's ambitions needed to be trimmed back to a partial decentralization of the Billancourt site. The RNUR needed to get mass production of an affordable small car, the 4CV, up and running; the only way to do that quickly was to modernize existing facilities.[128] Nonetheless, Lefaucheux's proposal still entailed a substantial reduction of

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violation of Boulogne's new city plan, leaving Renault to protest that the Conseil d'État had absolved it of such violations due to its prior occupation of the land. Note of July 1944 and other exchanges, CAC 19900583/5, Renault papers.

[124] Gravier used the Renault project as the main case study of decentralization in his 1947 opus. Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 319-325. Dessus saw the removal of the factories as far-fetched. He even used the anti-Billancourt movement to mock "le schème le plus naïf de la décentralisation," in which "on prend 30,000 ouvriers, on les transporte à la campagne par des procédés plus ou moins autoritaires, et on fait leur bonheur. Après cela, le prix des autos a doublé." Dessus, "La décentralisation des entreprises," conference at ESOP, 9 December 1943, CAC 19770777/3.

[125] Loubet, *Renault*, 54-55.

[126] Michel Freyssenet, *Division du travail et mobilisation quotidienne de la main-d'œuvre: Les cas Renault et Fiat* (Paris: Centre de Sociologie Urbaine, 1979), 41, 56, 64.

[127] CEGOS, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 18, 26.

[128] Loubet, *Renault*, 115; Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 43; Fridenson, "Les Usines Renault," 140. The fear of disrupting production had already been a main justification for the government's green light for

the historic auto factory. Truck, rail, and arms productions—along with a total of 10,000 Billancourt workers—would be sent out to Renault's existing provincial sites and a new plant in Flins, forty kilometers west of Paris. Billancourt would be capped at about sixty percent of its prewar workforce (20,000 workers, down from between 34,000 and 38,000 in the 1930s). Dautry accepted Lefaucheux's compromise in a March 1945 accord—insisting however that it was just a first step in Renault's decentralization.[129]

The 1945 accord was a remarkable opening for transferring France's working-class bastion, but the project floundered due to its fantastic cost, which Lefaucheux estimated at between 11 and 16 billion francs. The construction of new worker housing counted for two-thirds of the price tag.[130] Renault's decentralization of defense production to Le Mans in the 1930s had ended with the same conclusion as Dessus' studies under Vichy: since provincial housing was in a piteous state, new lodgings were a precondition for attracting workers out of the Paris region.[131] Labor felt the same way. As Lefaucheux reported,

> Les représentants du personnel, traduisant l'opinion de leurs camarades, nous ont fait toucher du doigt qu'il est impossible d'obtenir qu'un ouvrier, même médiocrement logé dans la région parisienne, accepte de quitter sa famille, ses relations, ses distractions habituelles, pour courir les risques d'un dépaysement, à moins qu'il ne soit assuré de trouver en province un logement confortable et un centre urbain où il retrouvera les distractions auxquelles il est habitué et où sa femme jouira de mêmes commodités que celles qu'elle avait à Paris (eau, gaz, électricité, par exemple).[132]

With six union leaders now sitting on Renault's consultative councils (the conseil d'entreprise and conseil d'administration), workers had the power to impose good housing as a tradeoff for decentralization.

Lefaucheux proclaimed that with new housing added to the bill, decentralization could not be "une opération payante" for a manufacturer. Transferring workers would

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Renault's reconstruction after 1943. Laval to DGEN Délégué général à l'Équipement national, 18 May 1943, and Pétain to Laval, 4 June 1943, CHAN F60/379; Markou, "La décentralisation industrielle," 64.

[129] "Note sur la décentralisation des usines Renault," 20 August 1945, CAC 19900583/5.

[130] The price went up quickly between 1944-45, on account of inflation. Loubet, *Renault*, 49.

[131] Not only had it been "extrêmement difficile d'obtenir que des gens de Billancourt consentent à se rendre au Mans," Lefaucheux told a 1945 conference on decentralization, but in addition "ceux qui l'ont accepté se sont trouvés dans...des conditions très précaires et beaucoup d'entre eux [ont] occup[é] des habitations insalubres." CEGOS, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 20.

[132] Ibid.

have to be a broad social and urban project—and the state would have to foot the bill.[133] The urbanists at the SARP and the MRU agreed.[134] The Finance Minister, however, had sticker shock. To his apparent surprise, Dautry was unable to obtain funding for Billancourt's transfer.[135] At that point, a furious Lefaucheux and his allies at the Ministry of Industry considered the 1945 accord moot, and proceeded to focus on modernizing Billancourt. In the end, therefore, it was the reformist project of removing the capital's working class from blighted suburbs, more than the problem of production, which killed the Renault project. Imagined as a way of giving an urban proletariat a better life in the provinces, the reformist dream simply cost too much.

Thanks to the unwillingness of either the government or the company to pay for decentralization, Renault's reconstruction proceeded without any agreement between state planners and company leaders. In 1948, desperate for room to expand, Lefaucheux contacted the SARP with a proposal that looked like a watered-down version of the 1945 accord. But the deal fell through for the same reasons as in 1945: a lack of state money to fund transfers. Pierre Gibel, backed by the Interior Ministry and the Préfecture de police, demanded a strict timetable for shrinking Billancourt. They were determined to ensure that Flins would not simply be an overspill extension, freeing up room for new

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[133] Ibid.: 21, 23.

[134] There were apparent disagreements about how much RNUR should pay. Lefaucheux mentioned in 1945 that the MRU wanted the company to pay for up to 40 percent of the transfer, which he saw as excessive. Ibid.: 24. On the other hand, the early consensus that a transfer of workers was a social project that should be paid in large part by the state was shared by all—and made all the more explicit when state decentralizers balked at the idea of paying for decentralization *qua* overspill growth. (See below.) Even the most ferocious of government decentralizers—such as Pierre Gibel, who made a career of hating Billancourt as head of the SARP—conceded that the government could only demand as much transfer as it was willing to fund. Minutes of the Commission des questions industrielles, CARP, 12 and 26 January 1948, CAC 19770911/23.

[135] Loubet, *Renault*, 114; Fridenson, "Les Usines Renault," 140. On several other occasions over the next few years, MRU officials thought they had secured state money only to be rebuked by their colleagues at Finance. Ironically, the Finance Minister was none other than René Pleven, a Breton politician who after the 1950s would take a lead role in promoting decentralization—but who in 1945 was an "economic liberal disinclined to applaud the statist interventionism of Communist and Socialist ministers in the first years of the Fourth Republic." Herrick Chapman, *State Capitalism and Working-Class Radicalism in the French Aircraft Industry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 273. On attempts to find funding for Renault, see Lefaucheux, "Note sur la décentralisation des usines Renault," 26 December 1944; Dossier of cost study, April 1945; "Note sur la décentralisation des usines Renault," 20 August 1945; and MRU to Production Industrielle, 6 June 1945; all in 19830589/5.

growth at the existing site. Lefaucheux, however, refused such constraining stipulations, and the deal fell through.[136]

Renault and the MRU finally signed a convention two years later. The agreement reiterated the goal of reducing Billancourt, but in reality it was a complete disavowal of the SARP's decentralization program. The minister of Reconstruction and Urbanism, Eugène Claudius-Petit, allowed Renault to begin its expansion in Flins—now tagged to receive a brand new car body and assembly plant, rather than workshops transferred from Billancourt—in exchange for a future plant in the provinces. The 1950 accord contained few of the concrete stipulations on shrinking Billancourt which the SARP had demanded.[137]

Gibel pleaded with his minister to take a tougher stance, in order to avoid discrediting decentralization policy. Claudius-Petit had just announced with great ceremony the rebirth of *aménagement du territoire*, and even named Lefaucheux to sit on the MRU's planning commission. If in these circumstances the government still could not make its nationalized automaker cooperate, what private company would agree to decentralize?[138] Moreover, the MRU was in a position of force. Renault desperately needed room to expand, needed to regularize its illegal construction in Billancourt, and even needed the MRU's help in Flins, to complete its land purchases and build housing. All the same, Claudius-Petit caved into Renault's demands. The automaker pleaded that its new factory needed to stay close to Paris and European markets, and that the schedule

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[136] Renault, backed by the Ministry of Industry, demanded flexibility on the calendar—decentralization must not interfere with production—and wanted the government to fund the project. Minutes of the Commission des questions industrielles, CARP, 12 and 26 January 1948, CAC 19770911/23; Renault counter-proposal of convention 3 June 1949, and minutes of meeting with RNUR, June 1949 Eugène Claudius-Petit archives CHAN 538AP/82. On the "O" factory site, see Hatzfeld et al., "Renault-Billancourt," 226, 281-282.

[137] Renault was expected to shrink its factories at Boulogne by about a sixth, almost entirely eliminate its Issy-les-Moulineaux installation, and build provincial installations to replace its Sèvres and Meudon sections. However, as Gibel had feared, no specific calendar was attached to these evacuations and Claudius-Petit agreed that the state should foot the bill for any transfers. MRU-RNUR convention, 4 July 1950, CAC 19900592/12. As for provincial industrialization, the MRU extracted a commitment for a new parts plant in the Normandy town of Cléon, but the provincial plant was likewise delayed until 1959. "Note sommaire sur la Régie nationale Renault," 16 March 1950; Gibel, "Note à M. le Ministre," 17 May 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives CHAN 538AP/82; Loubet, *Renault*, 113-116; Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 57.

[138] SARP, "Note sommaire sur la Régie nationale Renault," Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82;Benoît Pouvreau, "La politique d'aménagement du territoire d'Eugène Claudius-Petit," *Vingtième Siècle Revue d'Histoire* 79 (2003): 48.

for shrinking Billancourt needed to follow production logics.[139] Decentralization would have to take a back seat to expansion and corporate competitiveness.

Like SIMCA's move to Poissy a few years later, the Flins deal seemed to show that big corporations used *aménagement du territoire* more than they suffered it.[140] As if to drive the last stake through the MRU's pretension to control Parisian industry, the very same day that Claudius-Petit signed the Renault convention, he received an outraged protest from the head of Nuisance Control at the Préfecture de police. The MRU's accord did not require Renault to neutralize its most noxious foundries at Billancourt—whose pollution would have gotten many a smaller firm kicked out of the city. Even worse, the oversight risked ruining the MRU's main victory in the 1950 accord: the liberation of industrial land near the Pont de Sèvres for housing development. The Pont de Sèvres was directly in the line of the foundries' yellow fumes, Nuisance Control explained; residents there had already reported illnesses and dead vegetables. "Vraiment," Claudius-Petit ranted in a letter to Gibel, "nous apparaissons parfaitement ridicules en cette affaire!"[141]

When Flins began hiring in October 1951, Renault officials still affirmed the 1940s ideal of transferring Parisian workers to the countryside. The new factory would be

> un programme de réelle décentralisation, c'est-à-dire non pas seulement comme dans la plupart des cas, l'affectation à des tâches industrielles de travailleurs recrutés dans des régions agricoles, mais bien le déplacement de travailleurs de la région parisienne qui quitteront des centres surpeuplés pour venir s'établir auprès de nouvelles usines.[142]

In reality, few Billancourt workers accepted to migrate to the new plant, even though it was located just a few dozen kilometers away.[143] Moreover, the housing

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[139] Loubet, *Renault*, 113.

[140] "Renault exagère," clipping of unidentified newspaper, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82; Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine*, 17-18, 25.

[141] Nuisance Control had been raising such issues for years, but Gibel and the MRU let themselves be convinced by Renault and the Ministry of Industry that pollution-control was too expensive. "Note à M. Gibel," 6 July 1950, and "Note à M. Balloul," 6 July 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82.

[142] Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 60-64. However, eight months earlier Renault had told the Ministry of Industry, "Il n'y aura pas, sauf cas particuliers, apport de main-d'œuvre de la région parisienne ou d'autres régions éloignées, la main-d'œuvre étant recrutée dans les environs immédiats." Meilhan to Bichet, 27 February 1951, CAC 19900592/12.

[143] As of 1961, the company had proposed a transfer to 2500 workers, but only 250 accepted.

meant to greet transferred Parisians lagged behind schedule, once again due to the program's cost: Renault had trouble finding creditors who would put forward the reduced amount of three billion francs for two thousand units.[144]

In the end, Flins became a typical low-skill branch plant. Unlike Renault's initial 1945 project, the heavily standardized car assembly plant left most skilled tasks behind in Billancourt. The overwhelming majority of new employees were hastily trained workers recruited in the area.[145] As if to hammer home the inanity of trying to frame "real decentralization" as the transfer of Parisian workers, Flins' directors were overwhelmed by the outpouring of regional demand for Renault jobs. In 1952, there were seventy applications for every job offered, with candidates coming from miles away.[146]

Flins set the tone for Renault's postwar decentralization. Transfers of Parisian factories and workers remained a rarity. When the company sent a motor and gearbox unit from Billancourt to Cléon in 1958—with machines and a startup team of about two hundred personnel making the move—it entailed a laborious and costly operation, which once again confirmed for government officials that transfers would have to be kept to a minimum.[147] The total decentralization of Renault's new truck subsidiary, the SAVIEM, to the Caen region in the mid-

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Nahid Bouakline and Catherine Omnès, "Billancourt et la politique du logement de la Régie (1945-1992)," in *Renault sur Seine: Hommes et lieux de mémoires de l'industrie automobile*, ed. Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, and Émile Temime (Paris: La Découverte, 2007), 194

[144] Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 64; Loubet, *Renault*, 115.

[145] Flins had a far lower percentage of skilled *ouvriers professionnels* (OPs) than in the equivalent body and assembly lines in the mother site. In 1965, 20.5 percent of workers at Billancourt's UCMB were OPs, as opposed to just 4.4 percent in Flins (they would reach 10.9 percent by the early 1970s). Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 35, 57-58, 63-64. Aside from the Le Mans plant, with all its difficulties, Renault never managed to undertake a major decentralization without standardizing production. During Louis Renault's decentralization ideals of the 1930s, the company planned to "conserver à Billancourt les fabrications mécaniques et le montage, pour pouvoir continuer à bénéficier de la qualité de travail de l'ouvrier parisien." Patrick Fridenson quoted in Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 34-35. Early postwar decentralizations avoided the problem. When the company bought two small provincial factories and transferred some production to Le Mans, in order to make room at Billancourt, skilled workers were already present on the three sites. Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 45.

[146] Loubet, *Renault*, 115.

[147] Minutes of the Decentralization Committee, 9 June 1960, CAC 19900592/12.
On hiring, see also Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 81-84; Alain P. Michel, ed., *Renault Cléon: 50 ans de fabrications mécaniques* (Boulogne-Billancourt: ETAI, 2008), 81-84. Renault claimed to have spent 24 percent of the new factory's labor expenses (masse salariale) building new housing between 1957 and 1962. Only 22 percent of the new housing went to locals. René Houdin, *Renault Cléon dans l'agglomération elbeuvienne* (unpublished work).

1960s was unique enough for regional boosters to bill it as the "première grande entreprise française à s'être totalement décentralisée."[148]

Decentralized expansion thus established a classic Fordist spatial division of labor between Billancourt and the company's provincial factories. Unskilled jobs were disproportionately built up in provincial sites. Meanwhile, engineering and skilled production functions largely remained at Billancourt; so did company headquarters, advertising and commercial services, and research, part of which was transferred to a new research center in nearby Rueil-Malmaison. The result was stark differences in job skills, pay, and power between Paris and the provinces.[149]

There was much continuity in planners' negotiations with the company before and after the 1955 passage of new negative controls on factory construction. State officials hounded Renault to transfer production and downsize Billancourt, but achieved little of either. The Decentralization Committee was as interested in removing blue-collar population as earlier MRU planners. It demanded a reduction in Renault's Paris region workforce through a mix of automation, the non-replacement of retirees, and transfers. But in 1961, the Committee lamented that Renault's decentralization did not make a dent in the number of workers employed in Paris.[150] Billancourt's place in Renault's national employment shrunk rapidly, from 90 percent before the war to just half in 1958, but it did so through decentralized expansion in the provinces, not workforce shrinkage in Paris.[151]

Provincial expansion coincided with a dip in Billancourt's workforce for the first time during a company lull in the early 1960s.[152] Pierre Dreyfus, who had replaced Lefaucheux as Renault's president, reacted immediately, resisting further decentralization out of a fear that it would lead to unemployment and social strife in Boulogne. [153] After

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[148] "La SAVIEM à Blainville: première grande entreprise française à s'être totalement décentralisée," *Economies régionales*, 21 (Winter 1965-1966), 69-72.
[149]Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 34-37, 69, 102-103, 215-217.
[150] That left the Committee's reporter to again "regretter" in 1961 that the effect of Renault's new decentralization initiatives "sur les effectifs restent aussi limitées: 1,500 agents dont une partie appréciable sera affecté à Billancourt." Clearly, "les cessations de terrain n'ont pas pour effet de transférer en province des activités parisiennes." Decentralization Committee, minutes of 21 June 62, CAC 19900592/12.
[151] Loubet, *Renault*, 262.
[152] Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 102.
[153] Dreyfus complained in 1964 that the government's forcing Renault to send a unit to unemployment-plagued Nantes would takes 2,000 jobs away from Billancourt workers—and that an immediate

1966, however, Billancourt renewed hiring, and by 1970 the site was back up to its postwar record of nearly 39,000 workers. Indeed, the factory could not get enough labor. The Comité central d'entreprise complained, "[d]epuis 10 ans, Paris se vide de main-d'oeuvre ouvrière," even wondering if recruitment headaches were not the main menace to the Billancourt site.[154]

Paris planners had a similarly dismal record in terms of land use. They remained eager to reduce smokestack pollution and get their hands on key pieces of land that stood in the way of urban redevelopment programs.[155] Here too, however, the Decentralization Committee continued to chafe at Renault's non-cooperation in terms of liberating land parcels. Many of the main demands from the 1940s still had not been resolved by the mid-1960s. Renault continued to reiterate the same demands as in early negotiations: it wanted state funding up front, because transfers cost a fortune, but flexibility on actually carrying out programs because the imperatives of production and international competition needed to determine its calendar. In 1960, the government decided to ratchet up pressure and Renault agreed to a large neutralization of land. But even then, the company was able to impose a series of concessions—including new expansion at Flins, at its research and commercial sites in the suburbs, and even at Billancourt itself.[156]

As for Flins, the 1950 convention imposed a cap of 6,000 workers on the site, but the factory employed 21,400 by 1976.[157] Government planners did little to regulate the degree or rhythm of the factory's buildup, which essentially responded to the company's

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announcement of any more decentralizations would cause social strife. Dreyfus to Paul Delouvrier, District de Paris, 1 February 1965, CAC 19770911/251; RNUR to Decentralization Committee, 30 June 1964, CAC 19900592/12.

[154] The direction hired almost exclusively immigrants to staff its implementation of a two-shift schedule. Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 121.

[155] Urbanists would get choice pieces of land, since the "O" factory was next to Paris and Renault was willing to prioritize the cession of other key parcels, notably the strategic Pont de Sèvres. CARP, Commission des questions industrielles, minutes of 12 and 26 January 1948, 8 April 1949, and 17 February 1950, CAC 19770911/23.

[156] The thorny land-use issues included a certain number of peripheral factories, the head of the Pont de Sèvres, and the truck factory "O" (where the Paris beltway, or *périphérique*, was now scheduled to pass). See the Decentralization Committee dossier in CAC 19900592/12, especially the sessions of 11 March and 21 May 1959, the reports of 21 June 1962 and 20 September 1963, and the RNUR's letter to the Decentralization Committee of 30 June 1964. See also extrait du rapport du Decentralization Committee de 1956, in "Mémento des affaires intéressant la Régie Renault," and Gibel, "Note au sujet de l'usine O," ca. 1961, CAC 19770911/54; Loubet, *Renault*, 264.

[157] Meihnel (RNUR) to Gibel, 30 March 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82; Patrick Fridenson, "Pour une histoire de l'usine de Flins," *De Renault frères, constructeurs d'automobiles, à Renault, Régie nationale* (December 1985): 342.

programs. When Renault asked for new construction permits in the early 1960s, Flins had already hit 10,000 workers.[158] Gibel railed that any new concessions to Flins' growth would be "une grave atteinte à la politique générale d'aménagement du territoire"—making it impossible to refuse similar extensions for Citroën and SIMCA — but Renault got state approval for new hiring.[159] The Decentralization Committee lamented, "ce fut une erreur d'autoriser il y a dix ans cette construction à quarante kilomètres de Paris," but it concluded that new expansion could not be refused now. The Flins plant had won international renown, Dreyfus was ready to horse-trade land in Billancourt, and against all expectations, "la quasi totalité des 9,000 membres du personnel a été recruté à Flins et dans les communes les plus proches."[160] The committee thus approved a whopping 353,000 square meters of new construction at Flins.[161]

After the early 1960s, the growth of Flins cooled down, but only because government and company interests converged. The administration hiked pressure on Renault, like other industrial firms, to invest more in the West. Meanwhile, Renault was having its own misgivings about the wisdom of continuing to develop Flins. An integrated production unit brought productivity gains, but the giant factory's growing vulnerability to strikes, the drying up of the region's labor pool, and the low-quality urbanization provoked by rapid recruitment settled the issue in favor of decentralization. Renault would create a big provincial plant assembly plant as the government demanded, albeit not where it wanted: executives chose the Normandy coast over a location in Brittany.[162] However, when an upturn in demand surprised company leaders at the end of the 1960s, Renault reneged on its policy of capping its Paris region sites. Flins and Billancourt finally passed to a double-team operation and again hired massively. New

[158]Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 57-58; Loubet, *Renault*, 115; Michel Mesaize, "Renault-Flins et l'ancien canton de Meulan: Histoire d'une implantation industrielle et de ses retombées: 1950-1984" (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris X, 1985), 219.
[159] Gibel, "Rapport à M. le Directeur Général de l'Aménagement du Territoire," 2 December 1957, CAC 19770911/54.
[160] Decentralization Committee, session of 9 June 1960, CAC 19900592/12.
[161] Loubet, *Renault*, 264.
[162] The DATAR had hoped to get a big Renault factory in Nantes, but the company insisted on going to Le Havre. Renault won out in an appeal to the prime minister, although it was required to install two plants—heavily subsidized by the state—in Nantes and Lorient. Ibid., 263, 267-268.

recruits were now mainly foreign immigrants, who made up forty percent of the Flins workforce by 1973.[163]

The spectacular growth of Flins upset one of the main goals of 1940s decentralizers: to eradicate Paris' maligned industrial suburbs. Even before Flins became reality, opponents to the project—led by J.P. David, the mayor of nearby Meaux—complained that it would be an extension of those bleak *banlieues* rather than an answer to them.[164] Pierre Gibel at the SARP likewise thought that Flins would repeat all the urban errors that decentralization policy was meant to avoid. It would require the rapid buildup of "une ville de l'ordre de 50 à 80 000 habitants," in an area whose two main towns were tiny and already lacked housing. Rapid urbanization and the costs of congestion could have been avoided, Gibel claimed, by decentralizing the factory to a substantially sized provincial town with housed labor nearby.[165]

The MRU initially hoped that good planning would avoid a reproduction of the *banlieues* in Flins, but rapid growth soon doused its plans. The 1950 convention required Renault to make its new factory "un bel ensemble architectural" (notably by hiring the renowned architect Bernard Zehrfuss to design it) and to build worker housing in "des groupes d'habitation disséminés."[166] For several years, the automaker respected the goals of housing dissemination. Its first 1,385 units came in a mix of single-family homes, tiny twenty-unit buildings, and a handful of small housing estates of 200-300 units each.

However, after 1957 new recruitment made such small disseminated units impracticable. Renault needed to rapidly build three thousand more apartments. Gibel thus approved "La Vigne Blanche," a vast *grand ensemble* in the town of Les

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[163] Mesaize, "Renault-Flins," 221-222.

[164] David also framed his opposition as a crusade to prevent Paris' sprawling industrial suburbs from snuffing out the last of the region's green space. The Flins area boasted a long heritage of as a site of weekend tourism for Parisians as well as rich farmland. Ibid.

[165] SARP, "Note sommaire sur la Régie nationale Renault," Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82. One MRU note pleaded the case of sending Renault to Amiens, which had unemployed workers who were already housed; in this case, the greater transport cost to Renault would be offset by less cost in new urbanization to the state. "AT" (André Trintignac?), ca. 1950, CAC 19770176/1. The situation came up again in the context of Flins' expansion. Decentralization Committee, session of 16 January 1958, CAC 19900592/12. Ibid.

[166] MRU-RNUR convention, July 4 1950, CAC 19900592/12. Renault's Meilhan acknowledged the goal of dispersion here in a letter to Bichet, 27 February 1951, CAC 19900592/12. Only the promise on the factory's architecture was kept. Renowned architect Bernard Zehrfuss designed a factory that was meant to be a project of social engineering—replacing the sad work conditions of the Billancourt "bagne" with a happy and harmonious ensemble—as well as an international beacon of French mass production. Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 417; Mesaize, "Renault-Flins."

Mureaux.[167] The housing estate concentrated forty percent of the area's growing immigrant population in Les Mureaux by 1968. Similar units soon followed.[168] At the same time, the 1957 doubling of employment levels initiated what would become a vast network of buses to drain workers to Flins from across the region. Here too, the human and economic cost was such a large urban factory substantial. By the mid-1970s, company busing transported over 15,000 workers from up to one hundred away. Flins spectacularly epitomized the growing urban segregation between factory sites and workers' residency in the Paris region.[169]

The ambitious decentralization program hatched in 1942 had certainly run into severe limits. In the end, government planners scored one main victory: they stabilized Billancourt's workforce, forcing Renault to push most of its postwar job growth out to new sites, the majority of which were in the provinces.[170] On the other hand, decentralization policy remained powerless to shrink France's venerable working-class bastion or to rein in the new development at Flins. And decentralized expansion itself fueled Renault's continued growth in the Paris region, simultaneously freeing up badly needed space in existing facilities and securing government concessions for new construction near the capital.[171] If Billancourt was the prototype of French decentralization, as Dessus had proclaimed at war's end, it showed that the processes of growth and deindustrialization hardly obeyed the logic of urban planners.

Conclusion

When SIMCA announced its move to Poissy, just a stone's throw from Flins, in 1954, the MRU's André Prothin complained that the vast new auto complex emerging to

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[167] Gibel, "Rapport à M. le Directeur Général de l'Aménagement du Territoire," 2 December 1957, CAC 19770911/54; Mesaize, "Renault-Flins," 271-272.
[168] Fridenson, "Pour une histoire de l'usine de Flins," 339-340; Mesaize, "Renault-Flins."
[169] Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 209; Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine*, 46-48.
[170] Michel Freyssenet highlights that point in his comparison of Renault and Fiat's changing spatial structures in the postwar years. Both car companies created a similar number of new jobs between World War II and the early 1970s—about 100,000. But whereas Billancourt's workforce remained capped at its interwar levels—the overspill being pushed off to Flins and the provinces—the Italian automaker concentrated those new jobs around its historic Turin site. With no political power to force it to decentralize or pay the urban costs of its rapid development, Fiat waited until late 1960s (with fierce worker militancy on workplace and living conditions) to adopt a decentralization policy. Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 36. See also Michael Dunford, *Capital, the State, and Regional Development* (London: Pion, 1988), 203-207. In Germany, Volkswagen likewise resisted decentralization from its Wolfsburg site until relatively late. Jean-Louis Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).
[171] Loubet, *Renault*, 262-264, 269

the west of Paris would establish "une situation certainement plus grave que celle qui a été créée à Boulogne-Billancourt."[172] His statement summed up an era. In 1944, government planners set out to finally reduce the Paris region's large factories, which they blamed for the capital's congestion, shoddy urbanism, and discontented working class. A decade later they had not only failed to realize this program, but also allowed a new generation of manufacturing to sprout just a few dozen kilometers further out.

The fifteen years that followed the Liberation were thus an ambiguous period for Parisian industry. Early plans for moving factories made decentralization policy a lightning rod for complaints about runaway plants and deindustrialization, even as the policy floundered and Paris' blue-collar workforce soared to historic heights. Planners finally obtained vigorous state measures, appreciable investments in the provinces, and corporate commitments for future cutbacks in Paris when new growth made the capital's industrial development seem unstoppable. The expansion of the Trente Glorieuses thus set the stage in important ways for a deindustrialization process whose magnitude and social dilemmas would only become apparent in the 1970s and 1980s.

[172] Prothin, "Note d'information relative aux projets d'extension de la Société SIMCA à Poissy," 14 September 1954, CAC 19770911/55.

CHAPTER THREE

Renaissance and Stability: Provincial Industrialization, 1944-1954

In 1947, Raoul Dautry coined the term *aménagement du territoire* to describe the ambition of a comprehensive renaissance of the provinces contained in a series of recent plans.[1] Three years later, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism (MRU) adopted the idea as the framework for its new development program. Within a generation, the MRU proclaimed in its national development plan, government efforts would create provincial regions capable of rivaling Paris as great places to live and work:

> [d]es régions pleinement mises en valeur, où les activités de l'esprit se conjugueraient avec celles d'une industrie, d'une agriculture et d'un commerce prospères, l'ouvrier et l'étudiant, l'industriel et le professeur, le commerçant et l'artiste se côtoieraient comme à Paris et, peu à peu, se formerait ce milieu humain diversifié et débordant de vie qui fait de notre capitale un creuset incomparable.[2]

This was a vision of territorial equalization whose ambition was proportional to the disparities discovered in the 1930s and 1940s.[3] It was also a vision that supposed fantastic state investments and a great deal of political will to enact provincial change, both of which sorely lacked in 1950. When Claudius-Petit left the MRU in early 1953, he considered his *aménagement du territoire* program dead in the water, not the breakthrough recorded for posterity.[4]

In the shadows of this discourse of radical reform and collective uplift, the new MRU and its allies had a series of less progressive projects. The wartime studies of the Délégation générale à l'Équipement national (DGEN) clearly showed that the easiest path to regional development was a branch-plant industrialization based on the attraction of

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[1] Olivier Dard, "La construction progressive d'un discours et d'un milieu aménageur des années trente aux années cinquante," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 73-74.
[2] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national d'aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950), 19.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Benoît Pouvreau, "La politique d'aménagement du territoire d'Eugène Claudius-Petit," *Vingtième Siècle Revue d'Histoire* 79 (2003): 43, 51.

cheap labor. The Fourth Republic also inherited Vichy's conservative social ideal of achieving new development without upsetting the existing order in provincial communities or sparking rapid urban growth. And this cautious outlook reflected a political reality: planners still had to cater to provincial farmers and manufacturers who got by on cheap labor. These were all arguments for keeping wages low, restricting new job opportunities, and avoiding an excessive transfer of labor away from unproductive sectors. The ambitious planning apparatus of *aménagement du territoire* was as much a tool for defending the status quo in a time of rapid change as for pushing radical reform.[5]

The early 1950s brought two shifts that would lead to the final passage of a vigorous regional policy. First, the rural way of life and the traditional industrial bases of many provincial towns were increasingly under siege from economic integration and social aspirations to the expanding opportunities of postwar France. The decline of this low-wage economy was a long time in the making, but correcting it became politically urgent during the recession of the early 1950s. Local crises threatened to make the prolongation of protectionism a political necessity and even return France to its interwar path of slow growth. The recession was intertwined with a second key shift: a new political mobilization to speed up, rather than slow down, the flight of labor and capital from waning to thriving sectors. A growing number of modernizing politicians and state officials concluded that only a vigorous decentralization policy could solve a central dilemma: economic modernization was needed to improve productivity, to allow European integration, and to raise salaries, but the threat of localized unemployment and the resistance of low-wage business interests were hurdles to determined reforms.

By the time France's main regional development legislation passed in 1954-1955, these shifts opened the way to a more urban, more industrial, and higher-wage development program than the early promoters of *aménagement du territoire* had envisioned. Yet conservative ideals did not disappear easily. This mix of unmistakable changes and frustrating continuities can be found in two issues at the forefront of debates about new industrialization: workers' wages and labor management. Vichy's idealization of a low-wage rural lifestyle was increasingly untenable in the face of workers' postwar

[5] My analysis here and below borrows from Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 35-36, 92-93.

gains, expanding purchasing power, and the new minimum wage. Nonetheless, France's regional wage disparities continued to pose a dilemma for developers. If unions demanded equalization and a growing number of administrators saw good salaries as the path to sustained development, cheap labor kept struggling businesses afloat and allowed towns with few attractions to draw Parisian factories.

Similar tensions emerged in attempts to steer jobs to areas of surplus labor. The Vichy experts who first called for a regime of targeted job creation had a clear goal: to exploit the reserve armies of rural labor that would allow industrialization to proceed without upsetting France's old social order. On the other hand, bringing new jobs to unemployed provincials could also serve a project of social uplift and local empowerment. It was this second argument that ultimately pushed through national policies for steering factories to specific communities. In the early 1950s, politicians, boosters, and labor unions demanded the creation of jobs in their hometowns as a right. Modernizing administrators agreed, seeing decentralized expansion as the only way to ensure full employment and to obtain cooperation with productivity reforms. *Aménagement du territoire* began as an ideal of urban congestion and rural preservation, but it became policy as a tool of Keynesian development.

1. The Planners' Programs

The major elements of French regional planning existed in the long policy prescriptions presented by Gabriel Dessus, Jean-François Gravier, and the MRU between in 1947 and 1952.[6] This was true for better and for worse. These texts simultaneously outlined a series of progressive programs and conservative policies which, almost point-by-point, ran counter to those ideals of social uplift.

Gravier provided the most complete vision of provincial renaissance in his *Paris et le désert français*. In his vision, the government would plan sixteen economic regions capable of sustaining autonomous growth, each one organized around a major metropolitan center (*métropole régionale*). These dynamic urban centers would provide

[6] Gabriel Dessus, ed., *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949); Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950); Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport* (Paris Imprimerie nationale, 1952); Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national*; Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947).

the bases of high-quality industrialization: top-notch universities, research laboratories, and skilled workers and engineers.[7] This was the spirit of a new metropolitan economy. "On pourra dire que la décentralisation sera un fait accompli le jour où la collaboration de la science et de l'industrie sera possible ailleurs qu'à Paris," Gravier remarked.[8] And his pages contained more than a few programs which would be realized during the following decades. Gravier planned to reinforce existing regional specialties—"Grenoble pour l'électricité, Toulouse pour la technique aéronautique," and so on—as well as to create new ones through the decentralization of *grandes écoles* and specialized institutes.[9] Beyond these new regional capitals, decentralization would spread professional training schools and modern industrial infrastructure, modeled on Britain's system of Trading Estates: well equipped, public-run industrial parks. At the national level, meanwhile, roads, railways, and canals would be redeveloped to overcome their current centralization around Paris; this offered an ideal opportunity to create "un grand axe d'industries décentralisées" along France's eastern transportation corridor.[10]

Towns and countryside would become great places to live as well. Each region would have "un équipement autonome" in everything from courts to hospitals, as well as a regional transportation plan.[11] Moving down the urban hierarchy, the state would prioritize provincial towns in spending on things like schools, streets, and sewers. The renaissance of rural areas would be all the more spectacular, given the dire poverty on so many of France's family farms. Only equalization between city and countryside—in wages, housing, and transportation—could durably preserve a peasant France in the postwar consumer society: "la diffusion des produits manufacturés, la presse, la radio, le cinéma," Gravier explained, "provoquent des goûts analogues chez le citadin et le campagnard," fueling the rural exodus.[12] Gravier did not neglect leisure and culture. A vast program of tourist development would harness France's historical heritage for the benefit of local populations while simultaneously boosting "[n]otre première industrie

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[7] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 253-254, 267. Dessus called these the "'vitamines' de l'industrie." Gabriel Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique de localisation de l'industrie," in *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 95.
[8] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 267.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., 270.
[11] Ibid., 253, 256, 265-269.
[12] Ibid., 284-285; Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 100.

exportatrice."[13] Theaters, the arts, and major sports complexes would be decentralized. This cultural development of the regions was part equalizing project— "l'égalité géographique dans les loisirs" was as important as job and wage equality—and part civilizing mission: state officials needed to end "la stérilisation culturelle de la province."[14]

Last but not least, economic renewal relied on the deconcentration of political and administrative power from Paris. Gravier apparently saw little contradiction between his regionalist convictions and his remarkably *dirigiste* conception of state authority. The feeble economic regions created in 1917 would have to become true "syndicats régionaux," capable of asserting provincial economic interests in the capital. They would boast a regional prefect (which Gravier initially called a "gouverneur régional"), a viable regional budget to offset the weakness of local finances in France, and a regional Economic Council. Here was a program with striking similarities to the decentralization reforms of 1982.[15]

Gravier's political project had a problem: France's recent "organisation régionale bâclée."[16] In effect, Vichy had given regional prefects broad formal powers to undertake economic development and impose wartime order. The reform got stuck in the tasks of managing wartime scarcity and in bureaucratic infighting, and Vichy's taint ensured that Liberation leaders repealed the new administrative unit.[17] The regional idea recovered quickly, however. The government revived the regional prefect in 1947—initially to maintain order during massive strikes—and within a decade the idea of economic regionalism recovered from its association with anti-Republican reaction.[18] Gravier published his 1947 work with *la Fédération*, a revived federalist movement that played a crucial, and long overlooked, role in pushing for a new generation of provincial development coalitions.[19]

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[13] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 269-270.
[14] Ibid., 261, 265.
[15] Ibid., 250-251.
[16] Ibid., 250.
[17] Marc Olivier Baruch, *Servir l'État français: L'administration en France de 1940 à 1944* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 237-250.
[18] Yves Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation dans le débat politique français, 1945-1969* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1974), 182-198.
[19] Many of its early leaders had a past in promoting a Right-leaning version of corporatism in the interwar years and under Vichy, although Prudhonian socialism influenced some. After the war, economic

With its vibrant regional industries, dynamic *métropoles*, and top-notch infrastructure, Gravier's program had something to please everyone. No wonder his text so influenced postwar leaders, from the MRU and conservative boosters to Left regionalists in the 1960s. Yet many of Gravier's suggestions and the immediate prescriptions of his fellow planners contradicted this equalizing vision—in terms of wages and job opportunities, provincial empowerment, and urban amenities.

First of all, Gabriel Dessus left his successors with a prescription for a spatial division of labor in which provincial communities would specialize in low-skill assembly work, with limited opportunities for promotion, while the best jobs and professional power remained concentrated in Paris. This recommendation sat uneasily with the promotion of holistic provincial renaissance. "A quoi servirait d'éloigner de Paris telle ou telle industrie," Gravier asked, "si la structure administrative et économique centralisée [de la France] demeurait intacte ?...Une décentralisation durable…suppose la constitution d'organismes régionaux capables d'opposer leur force d'attraction à celle de Paris."[20] R.P. Serve, a corporatist Catholic in the DGEN team, put the matter more bluntly: branch-plant decentralization would simply facilitate Paris' "colonization" of the provinces.[21]

The tension between decentralizing factories and providing good, sustainable jobs was thus present in government efforts from the outset. Dynamic urban centers were intended precisely to foster a higher-quality development, but they were a program for the future. In the meantime, planners accepted that the geographic segmentation of skilled and unskilled work was necessary to begin decentralizing factories to rural France. Given that Dessus did more than anybody to articulate this conclusion, it should seem extremely optimistic—or just plain cynical—for him to write that decentralization policy was creating a future in which "patrons, ingénieurs et ouvriers vivront assez près

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regionalism gave them "le moyen de poursuivre sous une autre forme le combat pour une autonomie locale et régionale," in the words of political scientist Romain Pasquier. Romain Pasquier, "La régionalisation française revisitée. Fédéralisme, mouvement régional et élites modernisatrices (1950-1964)," *Revue française de science politique* 53 (2003): 102-106, 110.

[20] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 249.

[21] R.P. Serve, "Quelques remarques générales sur la Décentralisation industrielle et le problème rural," 7 July 1943, CAC 19770777/2.

les uns des autres, et non plus...matériellement sépar[és] comme aujourd'hui."[22] This corporatist community ideal hardly matched the new spatial division of labor.

If state planners accepted deskilled branch plants as a practical necessity, they enthusiastically embraced another means of limiting work opportunities: dosing new job creation to existing surplus labor. Gabriel Dessus promoted his project of steering factory decentralization to France's rural labor reserve, in order to avoid the kind of competition for workers generated by the aircraft industry in the late 1930s.[23] At the regional level, meanwhile, Gravier provided a model for planning new industrialization that aimed to limit what he called "les risques de migrations interprofessionnelles inopportunes": workers' flight from local farms and businesses to new factories with higher wages.[24] The new MRU took up these calls. In 1945, it ordered its provincial agents, the *urbanistes en chef*, to ensure that a growing job offer did not upset the balance of provincial labor markets.[25] This was planning at its most conservative. Both industrialization and its limits were designed to preserve the existing social order—providing enough jobs to prevent the emigration of poor provincials, but preventing the excess of new work that would accelerate the farm exodus.

Limiting job opportunities was in direct contradiction with planners' announced goal of creating diversified regional job bases. The DGEN and MRU planners were well aware that concentrating multiple factories was the only way to prevent workers and communities from becoming dependent on a single employer. As the Centre de

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[22] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 71.

[23] See chapter one.

[24] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 339 for the quote and more generally 321-346. Dessus likewise called for accompanying industrial decentralization with a series of rural modernization programs meant to keep agricultural workers and farm owners' children on the land. These policies included the modernization of family farms, the reform of the rural school system (to "atténuer les jalousies" between farm and industrial populations), and giving the agricultural population a priority in new housing and leisure activities. Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 74-75.

[25] These efforts directly repeated the framework of George's national studies. Chevalier note on schéma d'études régionales , June 45, 19770777/1; André Prothin to Inspecteurs généraux de l'urbanisme, 17 January 1945, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 3.1. The first comprehensive plan, completed for the Puy-de-Dôme department in 1952, provided an elaborate model for preserving the rural-urban balance. Requested by the department's *Conseil Général*, the plan was designed to counter the attraction of the city of Clermont Ferrand and the Paris region on the poor farm population of nearby Limagne. The dissemination of industrial jobs and rural development were coordinated with farm modernization and Clermont's expansion in order to "fix" the liberated agricultural population in a rural residency. Minutes of the CNU on the operations of the FNAT, July 1952, CAC 19770817/11. Minutes of the SARP meeting with the Centre de liaison interprofessionnelle de la Région parisienne, in the Commission urbanisme et reconstruction, 23 July 4 1947, CAC 19770911/51.

recherches économiques et sociales (CERES) explained in a summary of government findings, an isolated plant led to "l'exploitation de la main-d'œuvre dans des conditions de salaires, d'horaires, etc...que l'absence de concurrence et de comparaison rend souvent très inhumaine."[26] The DGEN had studied the plight of single-factory communities during the Depression; the collapse of Britain's monoindustry regions during the 1930s gave French planners even more spectacular proof that local diversification was the only way to stave off economic crisis in the long run.[27]

Yet the pro-community goal of building up resilient job markets clashed with the pro-business goal of avoiding competition for labor. Government planners tried to walk a fine line—recommending for example the creation of several factories in a centrally located town, but with the creation of no more than 10,000 new jobs for a city of 100,000 people.[28] Such consensual formulas relegated the fundamental choice between aiding or limiting corporate control to the practical implementation of decentralization policy. Moreover, some planners were not ready to renounce the old myth that the countryside was the best form of insurance, allowing workers to fall back on subsistence farming and rural kinship in the case of unemployment.[29]

The issue of wages and consumption brought an equally explicit defense of regional disparities. The DGEN studies on this topic had initially been conceived in an equalizing logic: finding a way for Parisian workers to keep their standard of living on provincial wages. As it became clear that decentralization depended on cheap labor, however, the experts took the direct opposite approach: trying to figure out how to protect low rural pay from the equalizing forces of industrialization and new consumer aspirations. As C. Henry succinctly explained, the best hope for making decentralization

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[26] "Aménagement du territoire," *Études et documents du Centre de recherches économiques et sociales* (January, 1954): 49. Dessus' 1949 conclusions spoke of "un insupportable sentiment d'oppression" among workers faced with a single local employer. Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 70, see also 93.

[27] See for instance the case of the CGE metalworking company's branch plant in the Eure department. Jacques Weulersse, "Un exemple d'industrie en milieu rural. Usine métallurgique de Tillières-sur-Avre (Eure)," in *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949).

[28] Even as he recommended dosing new jobs to avoid a "pompage" of labor that would hurt existing farms and businesses, Dessus recommended to "créer un marché d'emploi suffisamment vaste" to avoid dependency and crisis. He set the ideal industrial labor market at 3,000-5,000 workers in at least several different branches. Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 93, 95-96. The MRU echoed this idea but did not give a specific figure. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 19.

[29] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 40.

profitable was to ensure that rural Frenchmen "n'adapteront pas toutes les habitudes de consommation des grandes villes, et se contenteront, en fait, d'un salaire moins élevé."[30]

Government officials cited the lower cost of social reproduction in rural France to justify worse wages, but the DGEN studies made it clear that workers paid for these savings themselves. Rural workers stretched out a thin paycheck by continuing to live in the family home, which eliminated the need to pay rent, and maintaining a small farm alongside their factory job. The DGEN was all too familiar with the social dilemmas such setups created. Pierre Coutin, a prominent ruralist, had spent the 1920s observing how the "peasant-workers" in Michelin's tire plants worked themselves to exhaustion; he came away convinced that they only stuck to it in order to get by on subsistence-level earnings.[31] Living on the farm often meant a long commute to work, which only added to workers' fatigue. The DGEN experts recognized these social costs, but since rural subsistence was crucial for making low wages work, they settled for a biopolitics of worker fatigue. Dessus hired a doctor to test the limits of physical exhaustion before workers got sick and lost productivity, then translated his findings into official recommendations for limits on bus rides and on the size of workers' farms.[32]

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[30] Henry, "Eléments d'une politique de localisation industrielle," 23 December 1944, doc. 82 bis, MRU CAC 19770777/3. Likewise, Roussel of the Fondation Carrel talked of finding some happy medium in which new industrialization would satisfy workers being paid more by new firms than their old wages while remaining low enough compared to Paris to make decentralization profitable. Roussel of Fondation Carrel, summary of geographic salary disparities, 1945, doc. 107, CAC 19770777/3. Here early planners had struck upon a logic later theorized by economist Philippe Aydalot. Profitable decentralization required not just mobilizing local traditions of low-cost consumption inherited from the past, but also actively perpetuating them during the social process of industrialization. Low-wage spaces had to be isolated from changing consumption practices that fueled demands for higher salaries. Philippe Aydalot, *Dynamique spatiale et développement inégal* (Paris: Economica, 1980 [1976]), 318-329, 333; Andrée Matteaccioli, *Philippe Aydalot, pionnier de l'économie territoriale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004), 110-132, 348-354.

[31] Georges Friedmann, ed., *Villes et campagnes, civilisation urbaine et civilisation rurale en France* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1953), 278, 395-396; Pierre Coutin, "Le développement industriel à Clermont-Ferrand, et ses répercussions sur la vie rurale des régions voisines," in *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels, vol. 6* (Paris: Délégation générale à l'équipement national 1944); Isabelle Couzon, "De la décentralisation industrielle à l'aménagement du territoire rural: Pierre Coutin, 1942-1965," *Ruralia* (2001). See also Georges Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle" (doctoral thesis, 1953), 59-61. On the importance of such "double activity" for the maintenance of France's particular brand of small farmers, see Nicole Eizner and Bernard Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979); Robert Gildea, *France since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 125.

[32] Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle," 150. Serve, reflections on Dessus report, "Rapport de Monsieur DESSUS sur la localisation des industries," doc. 42bis, 7 July 1943, 19770777/2; Giraud to Fondation Carrel, 22 October 1942, 19770777/5. On the above issues, see James Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936-1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 112-113.

The wartime studies had also clearly identified the dilapidated state of provincial housing. But new housing was expensive and, in any case, construction remained woefully slow in postwar France. Provincial workers would thus have to stay in their homes, however dilapidated. The MRU made virtue out of necessity, praising decentralization as a way of mobilizing "tout un capital inutilisé...des logements anciens, souvent encore très solides, qui sont désertés ou insuffisamment occupés."[33] Keeping workers in their old housing allowed the MRU not only to cut down on the cost of decentralization and new urbanization, but also to reserve what housing it could muster for a more elite group: the managers, engineers, and highly skilled workers of new branch plants, who often needed to be recruited from outside the region. Jean Faucheux, the Ministry's head of industrial decentralization, was explicit on this point. The first priority of MRU was housing the "élites intellectuelle, scientifique et technique comme des ouvriers qualifiés, sans lesquels il n'y aura pas d'expansion régionale." Unskilled labor, on the other hand, was "supposée logée."[34]

Faucheux's comment reflects a broader elite bias in new programs for urban development. The higher quality elements of regional growth—the top-notch *lycées*, universities, and theaters that would be concentrated in renovated regional capitals—targeted what Dessus called "les aristocraties intellectuelles."[35] As the MRU put it, France needed to reverse at all costs "le drainage [vers Paris] d'un trop grand nombre d'activités considérées comme supérieures...cet écrémage des élites provinciales, dont on aurait tort de croire la source intarissable."[36] The justification for using state money to cultivate this new class of metropolitan elites was simple. They alone could move provincial economies beyond a simple branch-plant industrialization, unleashing "un nouvel élan dont toute la population pourra bénéficier."[37] Whether the benefits of this

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[33] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national*, 10. Dessus called this the mobilization of "l'effort accumulé des générations qui nous ont précédés." Rémi Baudouï, "A l'assaut de la région parisienne" (doctoral thesis, Ecole d'architecture Paris-Villemin, 1990), 161.
[34] Jean Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1959), 125-129.
[35] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 46, 64-66. The next year the MRU would adopt the more neutral term of *cadres*, a word fresh enough to still be put in quotes. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national*, 19.
[36] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national*, 11-12.
[37] Dessus, "Éléments d'une politique," 46, 64-66.

higher-quality development would actually trickle down to blue-collar workers, however, remained to be seen.

The foundational planning documents of the 1940s and early 1950s clearly had an uplifting promise: to make life in the provinces as good as in Paris, and to bring an urban standard of living to rural France. At the same time, however, national planners also defended existing inequalities and created new ones, in jobs, housing, and social welfare. Their conservative stance was clearest on the two key issues of wages and labor turnover.

2. The Regional Wage Gap

Regional wage disparities posed a dilemma for *aménagement du territoire*. Cheap labor was the main competitive advantage of most French regions, but low-wage economies were increasingly menaced—by economic integration, labor migration, and the political project of national equalization. Since social equality challenged their goal of industrializing the provinces on the cheap, government planners never took a strong position against the regional wage gap.

Geographic inequalities were sticky in France. The gap in male workers' salaries was cut in half between 1892 and 1947, but this equalization occurred almost entirely during and just after the two world wars. Outside those two exceptional periods, the regional wage gap stayed steady.[38] Neoclassical models suggested that salaries should equalize geographically as labor migrated out of low-wage regions and manufacturers flocked to them, but equalization in fact remained the historical exception. Disparities actually grew during the interwar years and again after 1947—two periods of strong "rural exodus"—and until the early 1960s, French manufacturing jobs continued to grow faster in high-wage areas than in cheap-labor regions.[39]

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[38] Philippe Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires en France* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1959), 159-161 and 143-158 on the period from 1947-1954. For a detailed look at the case of Brittany, see Michel Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne* (St. Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1970), 194-204. A more recent historical account notes the same basic trend in Paris-province wage gaps for similar categories of workers between 1860 and the 1950s. Alain Bayet, "L'accroissement spectaculaire des salaires et leur pouvoir d'achat," in *Le travail en France, 1800-2000*, ed. Olivier Marchand, Claude Thélot, and Alain Bayet (Paris: Nathan, 1997), 167-168. The war-decade plunge of the Paris-province wage gap for menuisiers, maçons, and vitriers is a case in point. If a Paris worker gained on average 55-81 percent more than his provincial counterpart in 1938, he gained only about 10 percent more in 1947, before 1950 allowed a liberation that sent the gap back up to around 20 percent already by 1952. Bayet, "L'Accroissement spectaculaire des salaires," 168.

[39] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 13.

Two geographies of inequality overlapped. Industrial wages for similar categories of workers roughly followed the urban hierarchy, declining from Paris to provincial cities, smaller towns, and finally rural areas. Regional differences could be even more important.[40] They reproduced the historic division between the "two Frances"—the nation's more industrial northeast and less industrial southwest, split by a line running from the Mont Saint-Michel to Arles.[41] Industrialization levels also affected regional revenues in general. The INSEE calculated that in 1951, the northeast half of the country concentrated 70 percent of the nation's wealth. On average, a resident of the Seine department had a staggering six times more purchasing power than a Corsican.[42]

Government planners were explicit about why they defended low provincial wages. Cheap labor was the main selling point for attracting new industry to areas with few capital resources, a dearth of skilled workers, and weak consumer markets; the reliance on low wages was especially true so long as France's national measures for decentralization remained weak.[43] And in highly competitive, labor-intensive sectors like textiles, deflated salaries kept unproductive manufacturers afloat or prevented them from moving abroad. In sum, wage equalization risked generating provincial closures—and antagonizing local business interests—while dousing the decentralization of Parisian jobs needed to compensate local layoffs.[44]

Nonetheless, the attraction of cheap labor had limits. The first was the national regulation of salaries, which emerged in piecemeal fashion between the mid-1930s and 1950. Already in 1936, the Popular Front government had envisioned the possibility of setting national wage standards by industry, but provincial business interests defeated the

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[40] Bernard Dézert and Christian Verlaque, *L'Espace industriel* (Paris: Masson, 1978), 104-106. Moreover, the Paris region long remained a region where dual breadwinners would get good jobs without separating family members. Pierre Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle de la région parisienne: Bilan et aspects (1950-1964)" (doctoral thesis, Université Paris 10, 1969), 167.

[41] Abel Chatelain, "La géographie des salaires en France et son incidence sur les migrations de population," *Revue de géographie de Lyon* 35 (1960): 383-386.

[42] Cited in Joseph Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle, reconversion, aménagement du territoire," *Revue Juridique et Economique du Sud-Ouest* 2 (1956): 370-371.

[43] To paraphrase Cobb, *The Selling of the South*, 280.

[44] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 11-14. On the academic debate about whether low wages were a competitive advantage for industrialization, see Dézert and Verlaque, *L'Espace industriel*, 106-107. On the U.S. South, see Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 237; Cobb, *The Selling of the South*, 180-181.

project.[45] As we saw, the only national contract, which aircraft workers obtained in 1938, was quickly repealed as part of a broader counter-attack on the gains of the Popular Front era.[46] The issue of national regulation was revived a few years later in the form of wartime salary controls, which remained in place until 1950. At that point, the government instituted a new minimum wage, the SMIG (salaire minimum interprofessionnel garanti). By the Liberation, then, state regulation had made geographic disparities an issue in the fight for social equality.[47]

There were also economic arguments against using low wages as a tool for regional development. First of all, workers could vote against bad pay with their feet. The migration to high-wage regions aggravated urban congestion and reinforced a main obstacle to decentralization: the scarcity of skilled workers in the provinces.[48] In Brittany, for example, up to eighty percent of graduates from technical schools left the region.[49] Even Taylorized branch plants required a minimum of specialists and managers; attracting high-quality industry was only that much harder. Low wages created other obstacles to regional development. Only wage hikes could force provincial manufacturers to implement productivity programs, thus fueling industrial modernization and upgrading human capital. Higher salaries also promised to unleash a Keynesian cycle of demand stimulus in poor regions. Growing regional consumer markets would boost local commerce and industry while attracting outside investors.[50]

Here, then, was the dilemma. Low wages might delay layoffs in declining sectors and attract labor-intensive industry from Paris, but they were also an affront to postwar ideals of social equality and they risked perpetuating a cycle of low-skill, slow-growth

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[45] Norbert Olszak, *Histoire du droit du travail* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 72-74; Alain Chatriot, *La Démocratie sociale à la française: L'expérience du Conseil national économique, 1924-1940* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002), 301-309.
[46] See chapter 1.
[47] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 9-10.
[48] Indeed, during the first decade of the postwar, the neoclassical model in which production would flee to cheap labor was the opposite of what French decentralizers observed; industrialization showed a continued concentration in high-wage industrial centers. Ibid., 13.
[49] See Boutbien, "Rapport sur la décentralisation et les salaires en Bretagne," January 1962, CAEF B/16350. Brittany had one of the lowest per capita income levels in France, Romain Pasquier, "L'invention de la régionalisation 'à la française' (1950-1964)" (paper presented at the Journée d'études AFSP, Rennes, 2002), 10.
[50] *Combat*, 18 April 1955, CAEF B/16130; Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 11-14. On the correlation between high industrial wages and in-migration between 1947-54, see Chatelain, "La géographie des salaires," 387-390. On human capital and regional markets, see Boutbien, "Rapport sur la décentralisation et les salaires en Bretagne," January 1962, CAEF B/16350.

development.[51] This tension constrained officials' choices, but it did not dictate them. A useful foil to French authorities' timid response is the New Deal initiatives in the United States. During the late 1930s and 1940s, liberals in Washington waged an "assault on the low-wage economy" of the South, as historian Gavin Wright put it. The creation of a national minimum wage was designed precisely to accelerate the flight of labor out of the South's low-wage farms and businesses, forcing the region's transition to a higher-wage growth model.[52] New Dealers faced similar obstacles as in France: the specter of regional unemployment and the resistance of Southern politicians and business interests to salary increases. And in practice, equalization did indeed come at the cost of major dislocation. Southern industries shed thousands of jobs, even as an evicted farm population was flooding the region's labor market. A potential catastrophe was only avoided by an unexpected stimulus—huge defense spending as the nation mobilized for World War II.[53]

The New Dealers' willingness to antagonize powerful interests and brave social upheaval required a faith that wage hikes were a motor of regional development. It also took exceptional political will. Franklin Roosevelt boasted a strong executive branch, was determined to fight conservative Southern Democrats for control of the party, and needed to answer northern labor's demand that Washington put an end to low-wage competition for their jobs. These factors added up to a vigorous national intervention.[54] By contrast, administration officials in France had a decidedly more conservative view of low rural wages, inherited from the Vichy years, and the Fourth Republic was a weak apparatus for imposing reform. This configuration ensured that wage equalization proceeded slowly and was driven by labor unions, not by the national officials in charge of regional development.

The DGEN studies began with the exact opposite goal of New Dealers. Roland Ziegel blamed the Paris region's high wages for damaging France's competitiveness in the global economy. The Depression offered a historic opportunity to force the capital's salaries back down to the lower levels of rural provinces: in a context of falling demand,

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[51] Cobb, *The Selling of the South*, 120-121.
[52] Wright, *Old South, New South*, 198, 270.
[53] Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*, 23, 63-65, 85-87.
[54] Ibid., 39, 60, 63-68.

unemployment, and new competition with low-wage countries, the only way for manufacturers and workers to survive would be "l'utilisation du bas prix de la vie à la campagne."[55] Gravier initially echoed this view.[56] And the DGEN's regional wage studies were initially designed to test out the hypothesis that urban workers would accept the quasi- subsistence consumption of rural France. Economic and political realities forced the experts to modify their discourse. The failed attempt to decentralize aircraft workers in the 1930s clearly demonstrated that the wage gap sent labor heading in one direction: to Paris.[57] In 1947, as a result, Gravier turned his initial stance around, now advocating the rapid equalization of salaries.[58] This change of heart may have been less radical than it appears. One pro-business think tank suggested that the rampant inflation of the reconstruction years would wipe out any provincial pay hikes, turning regional equalization into a *nivellement par le bas*—in effect forcing real Parisian earnings down to provincial levels.[59]

Gabriel Dessus had a different concern: fitting Vichy thinking into the Liberation ideal of social equality and working-class gains. In his 1949 publication, Dessus affirmed that "il s'agit de donner à l'ouvrier 'décentralisé' un niveau de vie égal à celui de l'ouvrier des grands centres." But he immediately countered this universalizing argument of equal wages with the idea that particular regional lifestyles legitimated continued disparities. Dessus explained that "des 'styles de vie' très différents" made the translation of standard of living in monetary terms "arbitraire."[60] He also claimed that available information on regional price differentials—and thus on the correspondence between nominal wages and real purchasing power—was incomplete. This was pure hypocrisy. The wartime studies proved without a shadow of a doubt that regional disparities in purchasing power were enormous. The DGEN deliberately removed this

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[55] Ziegel, "Dissémination de l'industrie française," 1944, CAC 19770777/2.
[56] Jean-François Gravier, "Nécessité de la décentralisation industrielle," *Bulletin d'information et de documentation* (May 1945): 37.
[57] See chapter 1.
[58] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 349. Gravier made the same argument to the labor commission of the Plan in 1946. Minutes of the Sous-commission effectifs, 5 July 1946, CHAN 80AJ/75.
[59] Discussion Flaus report, Comité de l'Equipement national, 16 September 1943, CAC 19770777/5.
[60] Dessus, ed., *Matériaux*, 44-45. The initial Dessus report of 1944 declared that a decentralized salary could be "légèrement inférieur" than big-city salaries and still provide a similar standard of living. Gabriel Dessus, "Introduction à l'étude de la localisation de l'industrie," in *Rapports et travaux sur la décongestion des centres industriels, vol. 1*, ed. Gabriel Dessus (Paris: Délégation générale à l'équipement national, 1944), 13-14.

finding from its final reports because, in the words of C. Henry, "[cela] risque beaucoup de controverses sans grand profit."[61]

In the meantime, the Vichy government designed France's wartime salary controls to freeze existing disparities, not to promote equalization. The wages commission set a target rate for Parisian workers and then progressively reduced official salaries in smaller cities and rural areas; these differentials were known as *abattements*. The lowest rate, in small towns, was forty percent lower than in the Paris region—only a slight improvement over the worst regional wage gaps established by the collective bargaining agreements of the 1930s. At the Liberation, by contrast, the national regulation Vichy had established with an eye to preserving disparities gave labor leaders a tool for pushing equalization. The new local and national commissions created to revise official salaries were required to consult unions; they quickly reduced the maximum *abattement* from forty percent to twenty-five percent.[62] It was this mix of state salary controls and union pressure that took France's regional wage gap to its historic low in 1947.[63]

In 1950, however, the government ended wartime salary controls. The new minimum wage took its place, but the SMIG only set a floor for the lowest pay—the state no longer determined higher salaries. The top industrial wages rose quickly. By contrast, the minimum wage was weak and progressed slowly; it thus quickly lost much of its initial economic impact. The SMIG concerned twenty percent of French workers in 1952, but only seven percent five years later.[64] There were two reasons for weak impact. First, the SMIG carried over the geographic disparities, or *abattements*, enshrined by the wartime salary controls. Second, the commission that designed the SMIG set a moderate initial rate and imposed a conservative formula for future increases: future hikes were

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[61] Here the Dessus team established a durable tradition of the experts of French regional policy—euphemizing in public a salaries question that preoccupied them behind closed doors. On French officials' tendency to euphemize the issue of salary differentials, see Philippe Aydalot, *Économie régionale et urbaine* (Paris: Economica, 1985), 73.

[62] "Les zones de salaires," *Notes et études documentaires* (April 25, 1951); Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 94.

[63] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 159.

[64] Jean-Pierre Rioux, *La France de la Quatrième République: Tome 2: L'expansion et l'impuissance, 1952-1958* (Paris: Seuil, 1983), 236; Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 11, 93; Hubert Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République* (Paris: Économica, 1987), 251; François Sellier, *La Confrontation sociale en France, 1936-1981* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1984), 193-195, 198.

tied to price inflation rather than to France's average salaries, which rose much faster in a period of expanding purchasing power.

The debates that designed these conservative features mirrored the earlier discussions in the DGEN. The SMIG commission set out to calculate what pay would give workers the "vital minimum" existence acceptable in postwar France. Unions and their allies demanded that the vital minimum include leisure and expanding consumer aspirations. This high-wage ideal had a concrete face: the Parisian metalworker.[65] By contrast, business representatives hoped to define the vital minimum closer to subsistence survival and rejected the Parisian worker as a universal standard for decent living—exactly as the Dessus team had argued. In the end, the SMIG's initial 1950 rate did represent about the average wage of a low-skill Parisian metalworker (*manœuvre*), but its conservative formula for increases soon undercut this equivalency.[66]

The minimum wage thus had a mixed influence on regional disparities. On the one hand, it initially drove up salaries in the worst-paid sectors and regions. In textiles, for example, the SMIG initially raised wages for more than half of all workers—and prevented a return from the cut-throat salaries that were not such a distant memory in many areas.[67] On the other hand, the minimum wage allowed average regional disparities to expand rapidly, as wage hikes in Paris and other industrial regions far outpaced increases in the SMIG.[68] This aggravation of inequalities was particularly true in higher-paid industries, such as metalworking, and for skilled workers—who, as we saw, posed the biggest headache for decentralization.[69]

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[65] Dana Simmons, "Wages and the Politics of Life in Postwar France," *The Journal of Modern History* 81 (2009): 599.
[66] Ibid; Sellier, *La Confrontation sociale en France, 1936-1981*, 192-193.
[67] Claude Lapierre, "Les accords de salaires," *Droit social* 14 (1951); Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 43-46.
[68] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 10, 92-95; Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle," 125-131; "La Construction sociale d'une notion géographique," *Etudes et Conjoncture* 9 (August, 1954). As for social allocations, whose place in workers' budgets and national income redistribution skyrocketed in the postwar years, Madinier study suggests that since many were pegged to salary rates, their potential to equalize workers' take-home pay across regions was largely diminished. Family allocations were more equalizing and therefore helped workers who had big families, but not enough to make much dent in the average take-home pay of regions. Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 49-58.
[69] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 39-46. A 1973 study showed that the gap between Paris and the provinces for skilled workers (OPs) was 38 percent in 1938 and 23 percent in 1953. Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 55-56; Lapierre, "Les accords de salaires."

Over the course of the 1950s, geographic inequalities thus returned largely to the workings of the private market.[70] Nonetheless, especially in its early years, the SMIG affected millions of France's worst-paid workers.[71] The official wage zones therefore remained a focal point of social battles. Government commissions gradually ratified labor leaders' argument that lifestyle differences were not a valid excuse for regional inequalities and that price differentials were too small to justify the *abattements*. Businesses therefore focused on the issue of jobs and development, raising the specter that equalization would amount to state-sponsored unemployment in lagging regions.[72]

The government officials in charge of regional development generally refused to take a determined stance on the issue, simply reiterating the dilemma posed by the wage gap for industrialization efforts. The MRU's *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* of 1950 and inter-ministerial negotiations on economic policy in 1954 resulted in such hand-wringing.[73] Finance Minister Edgar Faure defended the wage gap in the National

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[70] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 10, 93-94. In metallurgy, the initial reductions of the SMIG's official geographic abattements in 1950 and early 1951 translated into an overall reduction of the gap in real wages. But after that the two were *inversely* proportional: unions pushed down official disparities in the minimum wage, but real disparities for all workers grew. In 1954, the minimum wage was 3.75 percent less in the port town of Le Havre than in Paris, but the gap in average real wages for metallurgy was 19.9 percent; for the rural department of Calvados, it was 7.5 percent and 33.2 percent respectively. Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 92-95; Renaud, "Main-d'œuvre et décentralisation industrielle," 125-131. As for social allocations, whose place in workers' budgets and national income redistribution skyrocketed in the postwar years, a 1959 study suggests that since many were pegged to salary rates, their potential to equalize workers' take-home pay across regions was largely diminished. Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 49-58.

[71] In the poorest regions, like Brittany, many workers remained at or near the legal minimum. Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 202; Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1958), 99-101. A 1956 report for France's Economic Council reported that 2 million of France's 7.5 million salaried workers were still hit by the *abattement*—i.e., working for less than the Parisian minimum wage. If the average *abattement* was only 5.7 percent, immediate equalization would cost 120 billion francs, or 2 percent of France's total annual salaries. Above all, the SMIG reductions, and therefore the burden of equalization, would be "très inégalement répartie et très sensible dans certaines entreprises"—and farms, which were the most threatened—"et dans certaines régions." Meetings of the Commission des économies régionales, 24 January 1956, CHAN CE 503. See also the annual report for 1959, FDES Comité 9, CAEF B/16195.

[72] "Les zones de salaires;" Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 10-11, 95-107.

[73] When Eugène Claudius-Petit relaunched regional policy in 1950, he reiterated that the salary gap posed a catch-22 for regional development and warned that reducing the new minimum wage's geographic reductions would hurt decentralization. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 36-37. See also Eugène Claudius-Petit to Antoine Pinay, Ministre des Travaux Publics, 9 July 1951, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, 538AP/100. In the end, officials feared that the equalization of the SMIG would raise too many unemployment problems in low-wage regions. "Note pour le groupe de travail: introduction," 5 July 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4. See also Rapport Général de la Commission de la main-d'œuvre, July 1954, and minutes of 31 July 53, CHAN 80AJ/49.

Assembly, saying, "il faut...se débarrasser de l'habitude qui consiste à raisonner sur des salaires sans discriminer selon le secteur, l'entreprise ou la région."[74] No clearer rebuttal of equalization was needed.

The administration even tempered enforcement of the existing minimum wage. The Inspector General of the National Economy (IGEN), Louis Dufau-Peres, who was charged with monitoring the application of the government's economic policy, admitted as much in a 1954 letter. In principle, Dufau-Peres agreed that "la disparition des entreprises déjà économiquement condamnées et qui ne se 'raccrochent' que par la pratique des bas salaires" was a good thing: it eliminated the bases of a low-wage, low-productivity economy. But out of a fear of regional unemployment, state economic inspectors had been closing their eyes to illegally low wages.[75] Indeed, rather than forcing provincial firms to pay the legal minimum, the IGEN recommended that the minimum wage be brought into conformity with black-market practices. He requested an "abattement sensible" of the SMIG "dans les régions de sous-emploi."[76]

Officials in the provinces faced similar conundrums to their counterparts in Paris. The debate over Brittany's 1962 regional plan is a revealing case in point. The program called on Paris to eliminate the SMIG's geographic reductions. This was a progressive step coming from a rural region engaged in tough competition for industry, and it resulted from a particular political conjuncture. Brittany's regional development organization, the Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts bretons (CELIB), had forged a broad coalition of politicians, businesses, and unions around a collective fight to obtain government funding for their plan. This was a "période relativement euphorique," to quote the regionalist Michel Phlipponneau, and the CFTC union used it to push through its demand

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[74] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 5-6 August 1954, 3874, 3885.

[75] Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux et Inspecteurs de l'Économie Nationale sur la situation économique à fin janvier 1954," 23 February 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4. As the IGEN explained in a note to the prime minister, due to local unemployment Western workers were "fréquemment contraints d'accepter des rémunérations nettement inférieures aux salaires officiels...pour se conserver encore pendant un certain temps des moyens d'existence, si insuffisants soient-ils." Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse," 23 February 1954, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4. See also "Note sur l'évolution récente des salaires modestes en France," July 1954, Jean Saint-Geours archives, 6 = F.

[76] The IGEN promised, "Au lieu de tolérer, dans ces parties du territoire, que les salaires réels soient trop souvent inférieurs aux salaires légaux, on contrôlerait désormais strictement leur concordance une fois intervenu le remaniement préconisé." Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux," 28 July 1954, 42, CAEF B/16107. See for example, in the same dossier, the report of the Inspector of the Toulouse region for October 1954, who notes the impossibility of reducing the salary *abattements*.

for wage equalization.[77] Mr. Boutbien, one of the union's leaders, argued that Brittany's depressed salaries hurt regional development more than they helped it, by driving off skilled workers and maintaining a weak consumer market. As such, low pay hurt the CELIB's industrial program "dans sa réalisation et dans ses buts"—slowing job growth and harming its intended beneficiaries, Breton workers.[78]

Even this progressive breakthrough had limits, however. Many members of the CELIB feared that substantial salary hikes would hurt regional firms. Boutbien himself recognized that unilateral action by local authorities—such as withholding municipal subsidies from low-wage firms—would harm Brittany's ability to compete with other regions for industry. Calling on Paris to equalize the SMIG was thus a compromise solution. Since the minimum wage's influence was increasingly weak, axing its *abattements* would only bring a moderate wage hike.[79] Moreover, the CELIB passed the buck onto Paris in terms of enforcement, reflecting the sense that in a context of regional competition for jobs, only a national authority could equalize wages. When the government refused to take the matter up, Breton workers were left without a reform.[80]

In the end, unions and the Left were the driving force behind regional wage equalization, both in individual companies and through broader state regulation. In 1954, Robert Coutant—a Socialist MP from the industrialized department of Le Nord and a member of the National Assembly's labor commission—argued that the weak SMIG created "deux catégories de travailleurs": those in modern firms, concentrated in France's developed regions, and those abandoned to a low-wage economy.[81] Over the following year, union pressure led to increases in the SMIG and decreases in its regional

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[77] Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 365.
[78] Boutbien, "Rapport sur la décentralisation et les salaires en Bretagne," January 1962, 2, CAEF B/16350.
[79] This was not a regional equalization of salaries, but rather "une harmonisation équitable qui, sans décourager les opérations de décentralisation industrielle, inciterait les entreprises locales à rechercher une meilleure productivité." Boutbien, "Rapport sur la décentralisation et les salaires en Bretagne," January 1962, and the following discussion, CAEF B/16350; minutes of the Commission régionale d'expansion économique, 3 July 1961, ADIV 1076W/55
[80] Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 365-367. For continued union pressure in Brittany, see Alexandre Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église et liberté syndicale, un exemple concret: L'affaire Frémin" (masters thesis, Université de Haute Bretagne Rennes II), 69.
[81] Robert Coutant (SFIO, Nord), *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 5 August 1954, 3867.

differentials.[82] On the other hand, unions would not obtain the full elimination of the *abattements* until May 1968. In postwar France, as Michel Phlipponneau bitterly observed, low-wage firms exercised a "véritable chantage au chômage," successfully ensuring that equalization remained painfully slow.[83]

The Economic Council's Regional Economies Commission summarized a decade of government hesitations when it debated SMIG equalization in 1956. On behalf of a uniform standard, the reporter of the Commission of Social Affairs argued that supposed lifestyle differences were not a justification for inequality—"le mode de vie ou d'habitudes familiales n'ont pas à intervenir"—and that low earnings did more harm than good in developing France's poorest regions. Other sages in the Economic Council, by contrast, reiterated fears that higher salaries would generate unemployment in poor areas and hurt their ability to attract Parisian industry.[84]

Even as the Hexagon boasted record rates of industrial growth, the specter of regional dislocation, agrarian ideals, and weak political leadership kept millions of working people mired in low pay. In the end, French leaders took the opposite tack as American New Dealers. Rather than driving through salary hikes as a strategy for regional development, they decided that state-led industrialization was a prerequisite for wage reform. Delivering better-paid manufacturing jobs through industrial decentralization was the only way to eliminate the roots of provincial poverty—unproductive firms, unemployment, and a permanent glut of farm labor in rural regions—without risking regional destabilization.[85] This was the underlying logic that finally led to a vigorous regional development policy in France. Before strong measures could be

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[82] Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 251. Pierre Mendès France to Michel Jobert, 4 February 1955, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP, Dossier 9.

[83] The SMIC, instituted in 1970, had no geographic differentiation. Olszak, *Histoire du droit du travail*, 74; Sellier, *La Confrontation sociale en France, 1936-1981*, 193-194; Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 202-203.

[84] That was notably the position of the regional economies specialist Maurice Byé. Minutes of the Commission des économies régionales, 24 January 1956, CHAN/CE 503. It was only at the turn of the 1960s the government's regional policy commission finally admitted that the regional *abattements* of the SMIG was hurting more than helping regional policy—even as the CNAT reaffirmed the need to match up decentralizing firms with low local salaries, in order to avoid labor turnover. Sous-groupe aspects sociaux, "Rapport sur les aspects sociaux du développement industriel dans le cadre de l'aménagement du territoire," April 1965, and the discussion of its initial version in the minutes of 7 October 1964, CAC 19930278/195; André Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone: Villages, villes, régions* (Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1964), 201.

[85] Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires*, 161-162.

passed, however, new political challenges had to undermine the forces defending the low-wage economy.

3. Jobs and Labor

Control of the job market was even more important than the minimum wage in determining salaries and power in French industry. Vichy experts first turned the geographic balance of work and labor into an object of government regulation, but here too the changing economic situation and politics of the early 1950s fundamentally altered the extent and meaning of this state project. French planners initially intended their efforts to limit job creation to existing surplus labor, in order to avoid disruptive social change; this was the sense of their endless debates about whether or not provincial farms and traditional industries had workers to spare for decentralized factories. This conversation would seem retrograde just a couple of years later. As traditional industries shed thousands of jobs, as the rural exodus accelerated, and as administration modernizers decided to force the transformation of regional economies, it became clear that the *raison d'être* of decentralization was rapidly transferring labor out of declining sectors. Politicians and labor leaders did even more to end planners' hesitations by rallying around the principle that all towns had a right to full employment.

The conservatism of early labor debates is remarkable. The British experience convinced French planners of the need to diversify monoindustry regions, and in 1946 the First Plan demanded the mobilization of France's rural labor surplus to fuel industrial expansion.[86] In practice, however, workforce reconversion remained a concern for the future, and threats to the status quo ran into determined resistance. If Britain so rapidly transformed its heavy industry regions, it was because officials in London and in the provinces alike were haunted by the idea that interwar unemployment would return to these peripheral regions. In France, traditional manufacturing sectors were buoyed by

[86] On industrial reconversion, see Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 18-19. On rural labor, see Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français: Le cas de la région de Caen, 1950-1980" (doctoral thesis, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, 1982), 20. During the First Plan discussions in 1946, the Labor Commission had declared industrial location policy one of the measures necessary for a true labor-management policy, along the lines of the Dessus model of taking new jobs to excess provincial labor. Gravier sat on the commission, but the Labor Ministry and the CNPF had also followed Dessus' wartime discussions. Report of the Commission de la main-d'œuvre, 10/1946, CHAN 81AJ/11; see also the minutes of 12 July 1946 and 29 April 1946, and for the Sous-commission effectifs, 4 May 1946;

postwar expansion and had powerful political defenders; the French government thus felt no urgency to convert the economies of Reims, Clermont-Ferrand, or Saint-Étienne.[87]

A similar story emerged concerning the surplus farm population. Given the power of agrarian interests in French politics, it was hard to plan for a major reduction in the French peasantry until the rural exodus became an undeniable reality.[88] Administration officials and rural experts, however, remained divided about the size and even the existence of a farm surplus. Census delays left experts trying to extrapolate trends from interwar data until the mid-1950s.[89] When scholars and policymakers debated regional policy in the spring of 1953, one speaker admitted that this lack of knowledge was "à tel point que je ne saurais prendre parti dans le débat entre ceux qui pensent que l'exode rural continue au même rythme [qu'avant 1936], ou est complètement stoppé, ou est renversé. Je n'en sais rien du tout!" And with that, he concluded, "il est prématuré de conclure à la nécessité de créer des industries à la campagne."[90] Many postwar experts took a similar stance.

This debate divided the major figures of *aménagement du territoire*. Dessus called on the MRU to steer industry toward France's rural labor reserve. This proposition remained passably conservative. Dessus only intended to target areas with a truly plethoric peasantry, and there was no doubting his goal of social stability. Pierre George, the artisan of Dessus' proposal, wrote in 1946: "Ces régions prolifiques de l'Ouest font figure de réservoirs de main-d'œuvre" where industry could hire new workers "sans

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[87] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 18-19.

[88] Summarizing Henri Mendras, the sociologists Nicolas Eizner and Bertrand Hervieu wrote that for much of the Fourth Republic, "il est impossible de défendre, voire seulement d'évoquer le passage par une réduction de la population active agricole devant des spécialistes de l'agriculture ou *a fortiori* des agriculteurs. 'Seule une bouche impie pouvait exprimer une opinion aussi sacrilège. Pour l'avoir fait, M. Augé-Laribé, René Dumont et quelques autres subirent l'ostracisme,' remarque H. Mendras." Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 44.

[89] The 1946 census was heavily flawed—having been conducted before the migratory upheavals of war had died down—and 1951 census was canceled. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport*, 17. The MRU even told its provincial urbanists to study migratory trends back to the nineteenth century to provide a reference point. André Prothin to Inspecteurs généraux de l'urbanisme, 17 January 1945, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 3.1.

[90] "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," *L'Économie rurale* (April, 1953). In 1944, Dessus confided to a colleague that despite the wartime studies, "mon ignorance des questions agricoles me laissait, sur ce genre de sujets, dans une totale incertitude" when compiling his recommendations for the government. He continued, "l'agriculture pour moi [est] une terra incognita, peuplée de paysans littéraires type 1941, qui me semblent avoir à peu près autant de réalité que les bergers du Lignon et pas beaucoup plus que les monstres africains des géographes du Moyen Age." Gabriel Dessus to Préaud at Équipement National, 17 July 1944, CAC 19770777/5.

risquer de compromettre l'équilibre économique existant."[91] Yet even this approach was not conservative enough for Jean-François Gravier, who challenged the implication that France had an excess agricultural population to spare at all. Even in the West, he wrote, labor surpluses were small and "seront plus utilement dirigés vers l'agriculture" in underpopulated regions.[92]

Gravier and Dessus framed their debate in comparison to the Keynesian full-employment logic of British decentralization policy, which aimed to redistibute jobs in lagging manufacturing areas. During his 1945 trip to London, Dessus decided that the British thinking could be transposed to France's peasantry. The Hexagon had little official unemployment, but unproductive peasants were "en état de chômage latent"—available labor to be transferred to expanding sectors of the economy.[93] Gravier lambasted this thinking. The British case was "en rien comparable à celui de la France." In his eyes, the main problems in the Hexagon were decongesting cities and "colonizing" the nation's broad expanses of under-populated areas. As such, French decentralization should not aim to "assurer des ressources à une main-d'œuvre existante," like in Britain, "mais au contraire d'assurer une main-d'œuvre à des ressources existantes."[94] Gravier's statement spoke volumes. While Dessus looked forward to a Keynesian logic of labor conversion, Gravier remained tied to French decentralization's initial focus on territorial occupation and land use.[95]

The MRU took the middle ground, essentially combining all previous proposals in its *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*. The plan hedged on the issue of the rural

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[91] Tellingly, in his hunt for a rural labor reserve, George ignored the issue of unemployment, which would only come to the fore of debates in the early 1950s.

[92] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 294-298. In a similar cautious vein, see Louis Chevalier, "Localisation industrielle et peuplement," *Population* 1 (January-March 1946): 30. In 1958, Gravier recognized that he had misjudged the rural exodus. It was not just a question of wages and rural amenities, which could be ameliorated, but rather the irreversible decline of a social category and way of life. Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 107.

[93] French decentralizers needed to "raisonner d'une manière analogue, en recherchant quelles sont les régions d'où viendra en France, dans les dix prochaines années, la main-d'œuvre des industries nouvelles." Dessus, ed., *Matériaux*, 84. In the 1960s, rural activists demanded that the state subsidize agricultural salaries with the argument that the peasantry played a role of "chômeurs déguisés"—an underemployed surplus workforce at the ready to fill the ranks of the industrial workforce. Michel Gervais et al., *Histoire de la France rurale, tome 4: La fin de la France paysanne depuis 1914* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992), 520.

[94] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 292-296.

[95] On this distinction, see Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980*, XII.

labor surplus.[96] In any case, ministry officials thought that Pierre George's logic of prioritizing rural France for new factories pushed an equalizing logic too far. Not all regions could be industrialized.[97] And aside from the Paris region, most of France's industrial centers still had room to grow and boasted economic assets that rural France did not possess. In sum, the MRU argued, "il n'est ni possible, ni probablement souhaitable de répartir l'industrie d'une façon homogène sur le territoire national."[98] Moreover, the MRU shared Gravier's hesitation between social and territorial goals. The planners' main missions were fighting urban congestion and rationalizing France's industrial geography. Following that logic, putting jobs where labor existed competed with other priorities: the decentralization of industry within Paris' immediate hinterland, developing the northeast transportation corridor, and fulfilling the mission of internal colonization.[99]

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[96] On the issue of labor transfers, ministry officials repeated the need to send "quelques industries" to the West, but pleaded that it was "assez difficile à déterminer quel est l'effectif de population [agricole] à fixer dans l'industrie." The CGP thought it was "possible de dégager un effectif important de travailleurs agricoles, grâce à une productivité accrue," but it was still possible, as Gravier thought, that agricultural modernization might not be "exclusif d'un maintien, sinon d'une augmentation des effectifs ruraux." Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 18. See also "Plan d'un projet de note sur l'aménagement national," 20 December 1949, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, 538AP/100. Agricultural specialists told Claudius-Petit's 1950 *aménagement du territoire* study commission that there was no free agricultural labor. Minutes of the Commission centrale d'étude pour le Plan d'aménagement national, sessions on "les problèmes agricoles dans l'aménagement du territoire" and "l'aménagement du territoire et l'agriculture," 10 and 16 May 1951, 19770783/1. In the spring of 1953, the director of aménagement du territoire, Pierre Randet, still beat back suggestions that there was a surplus of farm labor. The rural exodus observed in the decades before 1936 seemed to have been stopped, even reversed, since then, he said. "Les origines de l'aménagement du territoire," 13-14.

[97] In some areas, weak development "paraît résulter surtout de facteurs naturels peu favorables, difficiles à conjurer." Randet, "Premières conclusions de principe en matière de localisation de l'industrie," 9 November 1950, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 2.9. In 1955, the Minister of Reconstruction and Housing (ex-MRU), Duchet, thought that the 1950 Plan was "trop rigide"—transformation industries were more mobile than it imagined. He also noted that since 1950, the problem of unemployment and "l'état de surpeuplement de certaines régions agricoles" had taken a much greater importance. Duchet of MRU presentation to CIOE, ca. 1955, CAC 19930278/4.

[98] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 15-16. In a similar vein, Pierre Randet, the Director of Aménagement du Territoire, refuted Gravier's claim that Paris' spectacular growth was due solely to a history of political and infrastructure centralization. "Paris sans la centralisation politique et administrative, sans la convergence du réseau des chemins de fer, serait cependant devenu une très grande cité," not Gravier's romantic vision of a million-person city, he told the CNU-SAT. Randet, "Premières conclusions de principe en matière de localisation de l'industrie," 9 November 1950, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 2.9.

[99] "Notre but," it wrote, "...est d'éviter la congestion des agglomérations industrielles." In that logic, it was still useful to decentralize industry towards France's historical industrial centers. Only Paris was truly overgrown. The rest of the northeast manufacturing belt and other big cities could accommodate new industrialization; their continued growth was justified by remarkable territorial assets. The continued growth of the northeast manufacturing belt and other big cities, such as Marseille and Lyon, was "justifiée

Above all, these debates were largely beside the point. Industrial decentralization remained modest, to say the least, and the MRU had little power to steer manufacturers who did leave Paris toward priority zones.[100] Its Fonds National d'Aménagement du Territoire (FNAT), which built industrial parks and subsidized housing for regional development, was doted with weak funds and generally made loans to municipalities, which were required to pay back their FNAT loan in just two years time.[101] This tight budget imposed an entrepreneurial logic on MRU officials, who only lent money to "des villes dont la vocation industrielle est incontestable."[102] As a result, the FNAT did bring new jobs to some areas suffering from unemployment and from a surplus agricultural population, but it was far from the "worst first" equalizing logic of later years.[103] Of the program's first four industrial parks, one was placed in Mantes, in the Paris region; two others were placed in towns with labor shortages, but that were well situated near the Paris region and the northeast manufacturing belt (Chalon-sur-Saône and Châlons-sur-Marne). The fourth industrial park did go to the heart of France's rural West: in the city of Rennes, which had a Citroën car factory all lined up for installation.[104] The

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par une situation exceptionnelle," the uniqueness of their "population industrieuse et de l'esprit d'entreprise de ses cadres," and the simple fact that they "fournit dans le patrimoine national un apport très considérable." Ibid., 15 and "Plan d'un projet de note sur l'aménagement national," 20 December 1949, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, 538AP/100. The Labor Ministry noted the shift in MRU priorities on this point during the employment crisis of 1952-55. Unlike at the outset of the 1950s, the DADT now accepted to make local labor situations as important as "les ressources en énergie ou les voies de communication" in industrial location decisions. Ministère du Travail note, "Le problème de la reconversion de la main-d'œuvre," 9 December 1953, CFDT archives 1B/43.

[100] Faucheux to Randet, 20 March 1947, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 2.9.

[101] Randet in the minutes of the CNU-SAT on the FNAT, 9 July 1953, 19770817/11; Danièle Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises de 1940 à 1954: Histoire d'une politique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), 404-405; Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport*, 39, 41; "Aménagement du territoire," 43-44. For the ongoing debate over how much the state should aid local governments on industrial parks, see the minutes of the FNAT, 26 June1957, 19770779/1.

[102] An extra restriction on FNAT programs came from the problem of land control. Before 1953, government planners had no power to expropriate land for industrial development, so MRU officials only made loans when the state, the city, or arriving firms already owned the land in question. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport*, 46-47. See also the minutes of the CNU-SAT on the FNAT, 5 April 1951, 19770817/11; Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, premier rapport*, 27; Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 67-68.

[103] George Gorse, MRU, to Ministry of Finance, "Prévisions de recettes 1957," 22 October 1956, CAC 19770779/15; Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 111-119. For a list of towns retained, see Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 406.

[104] Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *L'Aménagement du territoire, deuxième rapport*, 39-46. See also "Fiche documentaire, agglomération de Chalon-sur-Saône," October 1950, and "Fiche d'enquête pour la localisation de l'industrie dans l'agglomération de Chalon-sur-Saône" ca. November 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives CHAN 538AP/100; minutes of the CNU, 12 July 1951, Pierre Randet

subsequent batch of FNAT loans often went to towns that were both well located and suffering from immediate industrial problems. That was the case for the textiles towns of Reims and Amiens, Niort with its declining glove industry, and Lorient, where a big postwar reconstruction program was ending.[105]

In hindsight, it is clear that the MRU's early focus on land use hurt the cause of regional policy. The economic officials who championed decentralization when it became a Keynesian tool for labor management in the early 1950s rejected it just a few years earlier, when the MRU still presented it as mainly a question of urban decongestion.[106] The renewed regional imbalance between jobs and workers won over three main constituencies to the MRU's cause: economic modernizers in the government, new provincial growth coalitions, and a broader set of politicians and labor unions. In return, control over regional policy shifted. Between 1953 and 1955, the MRU lost its monopoly over *aménagement du territoire* to the vanguards of economic modernization in the administration: the cabinets of innovative premiers like Edgar Faure and Pierre Mendès France, the Finance Ministry, and the Commissariat Général du Plan.[107]

Modernizing technocrats had begun fashioning a Keynesian economic doctrine and programs for state-led industrial expansion during the war years, but they did not turn their focus to the nation's poorest regions until 1953.[108] In fact, the opposite was true. The First Plan focused on managing postwar scarcity and restoring France's base sectors: heavy industry, transportation, and energy. As such, it focused the tremendous resources

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personal archives, IFA article 4.13. The first token loan to a small town was not made until June 1954. The focus on sizeable cities was endlessly denounced by the ruralist representative of the *Association des Maires de France*, M. Berrurier. Minutes of the CNU-SAT on FNAT operations, 11 June 1954, 19770817/11.

[105] See the minutes of July 1952 and 9 July 1953, CAC 19770817/11.

[106] Etienne Hirsch—the second-in-command at the CGP and its director after 1954—is a good case in point. When Hirsch participated in the MRU's study commission in 1950, he was already dealing with the problems that led him to support regional policy after 1953: an economic slowdown, industrial reconversion, and the farm population. But in the framework of urban decongestion, Hirsch told the MRU there was no immediate need for industrial decentralization. The economic slowdown ensured that Parisian industry would not aggravate congestion, and Hirsch simply skipped over it since it was already decentralized. As for industrial reconversion—which was already hitting France's coalfields—Hirsch did not think to ask for the MRU's help in bringing new factory jobs to defuse workers' opposition to local closures. Minutes of the Commission centrale d'études pour le Plan d'aménagement national, 4 May 1950, CAC 19770783/1.

[107] Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 393-395.

[108] Philip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 101, 148-167; Olivier Dard, "Économie et économistes des années trente aux années cinquante: un tournant keynésien?" *Historiens et géographes* 361 (1998): 173.

of reconstruction on existing industrial centers. By the early 1950s, however, economic planners were poised to expand state intervention to the two main sectors impacted by regional policy: agriculture and transformation industries.[109]

They also shifted their focus from boosting overall production to reforming France's least productive sectors and firms, in a policy known as "reconversion." Reconversion signaled a new willingness to challenge farm and business groups that survived on low wages and government protection. As historian Richard Kuisel puts it, the ascendant group of reformist ministers and economic bureaucrats "viewed the 1950s as a duel between modernization and Malthusianism," promoting "the disappearance of archaic industry, commerce, and agriculture."[110] These men sought to accelerate the flight of labor and capital away from France's least competitive companies by rewarding concentration, specialization, and productivity gains.[111] They openly promoted the demise of so-called "marginal firms" as a precondition for raising salaries and profits, for preparing for European integration, and for warding off a return to interwar stagnation, which the recession seemed to forebode.[112]

The recession that followed the Korean War, from 1952 to 1955, convinced national modernizers that economic expansion was a regional problem. A majority of

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[109] Joseph Lajugie, Claude Lacour, and Pierre Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Dalloz, 1985), 180; Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 26-27. The creation of new regional development funds in 1953-1955 was legitimated by the fact that underdeveloped regions had received less than their fair share of state spending during reconstruction. Chalendon, note on the projet de décret for a Fonds de reconversion et de décentralisation, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP, dossier 6. Economic planners clearly had something to gain in the new policy: the reconversion of underdeveloped France and *aménagement du territoire* legitimated continued state intervention at a time when the end of immediate postwar shortages was producing calls for an end to *dirigisme*. Laure Quennouelle-Corre, *La Direction du Trésor, 1947-1967: L'État-banquier et la croissance* (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 2000), 185-189, 194-195.

[110] Richard Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France: Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 249-250.

[111] For an overview of early reconversion, see Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 226-230, 274-277; "Un Impératif économique et social: Reconversion dans l'expansion," *Études et documents du Centre de recherches économiques et sociales* 3 (January-February, 1955); Éric Roussel, *Pierre Mendès France* (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 365-369. Political considerations and budget considerations tamed the scope of reconversion in the mid-1950s, but the movement gained in vigor after 1958, leading to a quick liberalization of formerly protected sectors such as textiles. John Sheahan, *Promotion and Control of Industry in Postwar France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 237.

[112] Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 387. Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State*, 248-259, 267-270; François Fourquet, *Les Comptes de la puissance: Aux origines de la comptabilité nationale et du Plan* (Paris: Recherches, 1980), 207, 212-213; "Un Impératif économique et social;" Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique des économies régionales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 20.

departments had declining job bases. The hardest-hit industrial sectors—such as textiles, leather and shoe-making, ceramics, and coal—often dominated entire local labor markets. Their decline thus provoked local unemployment crises and an acceleration of emigration.[113] By contrast, the sectors that continued to expand during the recession—such as cars, electronics, and pharmaceuticals—were concentrated in the Paris region, in the northeast, and in a dozen big provincial cities.[114] Charles Barangé, the reporter of the National Assembly's powerful Finance Commission, laid out the main argument on behalf of a regional policy in December 1952. At a time of recession, he explained, the CGP's modernization program was an economic necessity but an "impossibilité sociale." Productivity measures would simply accelerate shutdowns and layoffs in declining industrial basins. The plight of rural areas was "guère différent, malgré les apparences," from that of industrial towns. Family farms urgently needed to boost productivity, but rural regions had no jobs for those who would be pushed off the land. French planning would thus have to complement its national focus with a regional policy: targeted job creation in areas of unemployment and rural poverty.[115]

The administration's economic modernizers increasingly agreed that the state had a responsibility to guide underdeveloped France to a higher-wage, higher-productivity economy. For Pierre Mendès France's economic policy committee, which designed new policies in the summer of 1954, the recession proved that it was impossible "que l'économie française puisse subir sans de graves crises locales l'assainissement qui s'impose."[116] As such, providing new jobs to declining communities through industrial

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[113] Direction des industries diverses et des textiles, three "Notes pour le Ministre (attention Secrétaire Général)," 5, 15, and 16 July 1954, Jean Saint-Geours archives, 6 = F. For some job losses by branch as of 1954, see Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 230.

[114] Extrapolating factory building permits, the MRU estimated that most job creation was focused on just 16 departments. The 79 others had generated insignificant numbers of new industrial jobs since the late 1940s, even as entire local sectors collapsed. Randet, "Répartition des activités industrielles sur le territoire," 3 December 1954, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6; Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 35. For a list of reconversion areas, see Duchet, MRU, presentation to the CIOE, ca. 1955, CAC 19930278/4.

[115] Credits for small and medium businesses remained derisory, despite repeated parliamentary demands for their increase and government rhetoric of increasing them; most of the paltry funds allotted went to big firms. Ibid., 33. For the Barangé report, see *J.O., Documents parlementaires, AN*, 12 December 1952, Annexe # 5072, 3310. For its discussion, see *J.O., Débats parlementaires, AN*, 20 December 1952, 6755-6757. For a unionist's view on the same problem, see Baboulène intervention, minutes of the Bureau et Secrétariat FMA-CFDT, 11-12 April 1953, CFDT archives, 1B/43.

[116] "Note pour le groupe de travail: introduction," 5 July 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4; Parodi to DIME, 27 February 1954,

decentralization was the only way for the government to "surmonter les résistances" to its reconversion program, ensuring that the policy passed "sans troubles économiques graves et sans injustice sociale."[117] The Second Plan even feared that "une période de mévente ou de chômage peut briser pour longtemps toute volonté de progrès," sending Frenchmen back to old Malthusian attitudes.[118]

The notion that French workers resisted migration was a main argument on behalf of decentralization. Early reconversion efforts convinced government modernizers of "la difficulté de provoquer en France de grands déplacements géographiques de la main-d'œuvre."[119] The urban housing crisis of the 1950s played a large role in reducing migration to Paris and the northeast, but government experts concluded that immobility was a general problem of French mentality. According to the Second Plan, the French working class was "attachée à son terroir...[un] aspect psychologique extrêmement important qu'il ne faut pas sous-estimer."[120] Provincial politicians made the same argument. Robert Coutant declared that, unlike Americans, Frenchmen remained "fidèlement attachés à leur coin de terre, à leur coron, à leur terril."[121] Whatever its cause, the immobility of French labor simultaneously prolonged unemployment in declining areas, aggravated labor shortages in Paris, and suggested that it would be easier to bring factories to workers rather than the other way around.

Bureaucrats who had snubbed the MRU just a few years earlier now needed the decentralization policy that those planners had incubated, in the midst of general disinterest, since World War II.[122] Their *rapprochement* occurred in a new working

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19780695/8.

[117] "Rapport au groupe de travail, annexes: premières mesures d'application," July 1954, CAEF 1A/390.

[118] Draft report of Second Plan, 1954, CHAN 80AJ/18.

[119] Coal workers, for example, fiercely defended their mines in part because of their company housing and retirement benefits. "Note pour le groupe de travail: introduction," 5 July 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4. See also Parodi to DIME, 27 February 1954, 19780695/8; Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique*, 17.

[120] Draft report of Second Plan, 1954, CHAN 80AJ/18, 87-88, 155.

[121] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 5-6 August 1954, 3867. Pierre Pflimlin likewise proclaimed, "Nous ne sommes pas des Américains." Ibid., 3921-3926. On the relative territorialization of European societies versus the U.S., see Patrick Le Galès, *Le Retour des villes en Europe* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2003), 21.

[122] François Bloch-Lainé recognized that MRU officials maintained the *aménagement du territoire* idea when few in the government were immediately interested in it. François Bloch-Lainé and Françoise Carrière, *Profession, fonctionnaire* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 141. As much as a policy doctrine, economic modernizers needed the practical knowledge and tools that the MRU had built up since 1945: lists of

group that coordinated the administration's response to industrial layoffs (the Comité interministériel permanent des études économiques sur le marché de l'emploi).[123] The group rapidly concluded that unemployment was a regional problem and demanded the decentralization measures long championed by the MRU: the containment of Paris, credit subsidies, and cheap industrial space.[124] When the Finance Ministry resisted, the committee took the exceptional step of bypassing normal government channels to publish an open call for a bold regional policy in December 1953.[125] Local crises had finally made regional policy an urgent political matter.

The government experts were responding in large part to pressure from provincial politicians. Jean Faucheux, the head of industrial decentralization at the MRU, later recalled how "la récession des années 1952-1954 provoquait la multiplication des appels de détresse d'administrateurs de collectivités locales." Mayors, MPs, and prefects sent their "cris d'alarme"—as well as their requests for new jobs—to the ministries in Paris.[126] Provincial representatives had a powerful arm: the notion that the state had a responsibility to ensure full employment. The government presented its jobs committee as a practical translation of the "droit au travail" inscribed in France's 1946 constitution.[127]

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candidates for decentralization in the Paris region, repertories of empty factory space in provincial communities, and early subsidies and land-use programs.

[123] The Committee included the CGP, Industry, Labor, the IGEN, and the MRU. Its archives are in CAEF B/16125.

[124] Pierre Randet, presentation to FNAT, 11 June 1954, CAC 19770817/11.

[125] See especially the minutes of the Comité de l'emploi for 23 November and 7 December 1953, and 11 January and 14 May 1954, CAEF B/16125. See also the Ministère du Travail note, "Le problème de la reconversion de la main-d'œuvre," 9 December 1953, CFDT archives 1B/43. The Finance Ministry refused to include decentralization alongside reconversion in a February 7, 1953, law allowing tax exonerations for plant transfers. In Nov 1953, the MRU, the CGP, and Industry were still trying to convince Finance on the matter. "Note sur les mesures prises par le Gouvernement français en vue de favoriser une meilleur répartition des industries sur l'ensemble du territoire," 1 April 1955, CAC 19770788/1. On its refusal to allow tax deductions on loans for decentralization, see Garrique, "Fonds de reconversion," ca. June-July, 1954, CAEF B/16127.

[126] Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 35. See also Randet, "Répartition des activités industrielles sur le territoire," 3 December 1954, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, article 3.6 Local officials also began sending up information on free labor and factories to be circulated amongst Parisian firms, helping convince the Ministry of Industry to launch a new system of local government advertising to national firms. See "Aménagement du territoire 1953-1954," CAC 19780695/8.

[127] The Committee included the CGP, Industry, Labor, the IGEN, and the MRU.
Minutes of the Comité de l'emploi, 5 February 1953, CAEF B/16125; Garrique, "Fonds de reconversion," ca. June-July, 1954, CAEF B/16127.

Politicians also claimed that it was the state's job to handle the shifting fortunes of local places. In Parliament, proponents of reconversion such as Pierre Pflimlin and Robert Coutant argued that modernization would be a human and political catastrophe if it accelerated emigration from condemned areas. Coutant warned the Mendès government, "les textes, même les plus libéraux, ne seront pas suffisants pour régler le problème de la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre...vous vous trouverez devant la nécessité absolue de lier le problème de la concentration à celui de la décentralisation."[128] The opponents of reconversion were an even greater problem for administration officials. The announcement that the state would eliminate "marginal" manufacturers provoked such an outcry from politicians that Edgar Faure, the Finance minister, rushed to Parliament with assurances that the reconversion program would be voluntary and limited to a tiny fraction of French firms.[129]

The evolution of the administration's program for a worker reconversion fund (Fonds de reclassement et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre illustrates the impact of this political outcry. In planners' initial drafts, the fund was meant to facilitate migration out of declining areas by subsidizing workers' moving costs and by building more social housing in industrial centers.[130] Subsidizing the demographic decline of struggling towns, however, decidedly ruffled the feathers of Parliament and the Economic Council. The latter demanded that the government tie reconversion to "un reclassement de la main-d'œuvre sur place," not out-migration.[131] They got their way. In the end, the fund mainly subsidized the decentralization of management and skilled workers from Paris to new branch plants in the provinces, as well as the training of provincial workers who came to operate the decentralized factories.[132]

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[128] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 5-6 August 1954, 3867.
[129] Faure, *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 5 August 1954, 3884. See also Affaires économiques, Directeur général des prix et du contrôle économique, 19 August 1954, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP, Dossier 5; François Bloch-Lainé, "Réformes de structure dans l'industrie: la conversion et la décentralisation," *Annales de la Faculté de droit de l'Université de Bordeaux: Série économique* 2 (1955): 108.
[130] One member of the Economic Council said of the CGP's approach to local crises: "En général, il semble que l'on préfère purement et simplement tenir la main-d'œuvre pour liquide et la déplacer vers le nouveau centre de gravité." Maurice Byé presentation, CES, Ivry 4, Minutes of October 1954.
[131] *Bulletin du Conseil économique*, séance du 4 August 1954, 494.
[132] Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 103.

The political message was clear: only a policy of regional job creation could obtain provincial cooperation with modernization reforms. In February 1954, Louis Dufau-Peres, the IGEN, warned that the government would have little choice but to suspend trade liberalization and make concessions to struggling provincial businesses until a program of new industrialization could be put into place.[133] Early *aménagement du territoire* is often associated with the sweeping plans of Dessus, Gravier, and the MRU, but it moved to the center of the political agenda as a pragmatic response to this immediate crisis. Politicians and planners turned to decentralization for a reason that still resonates a half-century later: it provided new jobs for communities threatened by plant closures or farm layoffs and for people pressured to work more for less in the name of saving their jobs.[134]

4. Political Change in the Provinces

A new generation of regional and local development committees increasingly provided the impetus for reform. By the 1950s, they finally realized the ideal of the 1917 economic regions: an organized coalition of provincial modernizers. National planners created a number of early postwar commissions—ad hoc institutions designed to accompany priority development projects.[135] But provincial politicians and boosters soon assured the driving force behind the new economic regionalism. Reims elites had created the first local committee in 1943. Others followed after the war, and during the 1950s new "comités d'aménagement," "d'études," and "d'expansion" sprung up with remarkable speed. By 1954, 41 committees existed; by 1958, they numbered 170. Brittany claimed the first region-wide committee in 1950.

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[133] Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse," 23 February 1954, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

[134] As social historian Xavier Vigna points out, despite unemployment levels that appear insignificant in retrospect, "l'angoisse du chômage" was all too present beneath the veneer of the Trente Glorieuses. Xavier Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière dans les années 68: Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 148. Between 1946 and 1954, French industry created nearly a million jobs, but also shed 279,000 in declining sectors. In January 1954, official unemployment only touched 1.7 percent of the active population, but added to underemployment and low wages, it stoked worker discontent. Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 213, 230.

[135] The reconstruction of the coal-and-steel department of Moselle spawned a *Comité départemental du Plan de modernisation et d'équipement du Moselle* in 1948. The arrival of a big hydroelectric dam on the Durance River sparked hopes for a comprehensive development of the river basin, modeled on the Tennessee Valley Authority, and a *Commission d'aménagement*, in 1950. A year later, another river basin development commission emerged for the Bas-Rhône-Languedoc. Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 409.

The organizations were of variable stature, but they gave politicians a local base to promote development and, collectively, they soon emerged as a powerful interlocutor for the national government. Two events precipitated this evolution. In 1952, the federalist organization *la Fédération* organized a permanent national structure to spread the committee form across the nation, generate regional economic data, share development practices among boosters, and lobby the administration and business groups on behalf of economic regionalism.[136] The national government then offered official recognition to the committees in 1954, both to benefit from the political excitement created by the regional development ideal and to cultivate a set of legitimate interlocutors for modernizers in Paris. The First Plan's programs had targeted a limited number of large companies, but the Second Plan's goal of renovating thousands of small farms, factories, and shops required progrowth allies in the provinces. The political subtext of this reform was unmistakable: the expansion committees offered a way to outmaneuver traditional elites in provincial communities.[137]

The labor question was crucial in this upswing of progrowth politics. Job loss and demographic decline provided the initial impetus for many of the new initiatives.[138] As low-wage businesses laid off thousands of workers, their protectionist policies became less tenable. And the claim that the state had a responsibility to provide jobs for local constituents was a central rallying cry of many early committees. The role of the changing labor situation in accelerating a broader political shift is illustrated by the textiles industry and the rural West. Both regional problems were on reformers' radar by the interwar years, but only became the object of concrete measures after 1950.

Textiles Towns

The recession of the textiles industry changed economic policies at both the national and the local level. Numerous textiles sectors had long been in need of reform, but too many manufacturers stubbornly clung to old material, low wages, and captive

[136] Initially designated as the Conférence nationale des comités régionaux d'études pour la mise en valeur de la France, the structure went through several less cumbersome names before culminating in the Conseil national des économies régionales (CNER), which still exists today.
[137] Pasquier, "La Régionalisation française revisitée," 116-119; Voldman, *La Reconstruction des villes françaises*, 407-410; Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 389-391.
[138] "Aménagement du territoire," 53.

markets to get by as long as possible without new investments. Their position became increasingly tenuous in the early 1950s, however, as job levels began to decline rapidly. Industry leaders created national reconversion plans; state and local officials teamed up to replace lost jobs through industrial decentralization. In a number of areas, new branch plants directed from headquarters in Paris superseded venerable regional textiles industries in the course of a few short years.[139]

Configurations varied locally. In Reims, a minority of young business elites had begun breaking away from the defensive stance of older manufacturers in the late 1930s. By the 1940s, they were actively preparing for industrial diversification. This ideal of planned reconversion stemmed from frustration with Reims' long decline: textiles had been struggling since the beginning of the century, and the period from 1914 to 1945 was mainly a time of wartime destruction and economic stagnation for the city. The turn to reconversion was also made possible by the fact that the local economy had at least a small degree of diversity. Textiles coexisted with champagne and food processing, both of which paid higher salaries.[140]

Nonetheless, young elites only turned to a new development model when their complacency was shaken by the strikes of 1936, by the defeat of 1940, and by the modernizing visions of Vichy technocrats. In 1943, a group of prominent businessmen founded the *Comité d'étude et d'aménagement de Reims et de sa région* (CEARR). The DGEN experts hailed the group, the first of its kind, as the sort of local boosterism that would have to complement national efforts for industrial decentralization. Already under Vichy, it was clear that local relays were needed to accommodate Paris industry. By the

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[139] Already by 1951, labor unions and manufacturers in the textiles industry had produced a national convention to deal with layoffs; cotton textiles manufacturers created a "Service spécial de reconversion" in 1953. The industry was increasingly divided between modernizing firms and recalcitrant conservatives. Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 229-230, 336-339; Sheahan, *Promotion and Control of Industry*, 127, 134-135. The wool textiles industry had been shedding jobs since the late nineteenth century, but the situation took a new downturn after 1950. It shed 33.8 percent of its workforce from 1950 to 1959, and another 18.3 percent by 1966. There were important regional differences: Le Nord and the south of France held up better than average until the 1973 crisis; Reims and Elbeuf were all but decimated before then. Jean-Claude Daumas, "L'industrie lainière en France: un siècle de mutations (1870-1973)," *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 47 (1997): 14, 18.

[140] George Clause and Paul Oudart, "La nouvelle croissance de Reims (1945-1980)," in *Histoire de Reims*, ed. Pierre Desportes (Paris: Privat, 1983), 404-405; Jean-Claude Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975)," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 192, 194.

late 1940s, the CEARR had established the basic development recipe that would feed the Reims area's industrial growth through the 1970s, based on replacing a textiles base with a diverse set of manufacturing decentralized from Paris.[141] Yet it was only after 1950 that this new development strategy went from being the ideal of a small minority to a widely recognized necessity in Reims. The closing of textiles factories and rapid layoffs finally marginalized textiles interests in the city's business organizations and politics. This shift in local power coincided with the MRU's relaunching of national decentralization policy, which again targeted Reims as a prime candidate for accommodating the overspill of Paris' industrial growth.

This convergence of national and local policies led to a period of rapid industrialization that not only eradicated the unemployment of the early 1950s, but even created such strong growth that the prospect of further industrialization divided city elites. Reims' mayor tried to slow the city's buildup, by limiting industrial land use and housing construction; other local elites denounced the growing domination of the city's economy by Parisian headquarters. A specialized regional industry with an identifiable local bourgeoisie was being replaced by factories inserted in a national division of labor. However, by 1958 both groups were silenced by progrowth leaders in the local community and in the national administration. Industrial decentralization radically reversed a half-century of stagnation in Reims and sped up the elimination of the city's textiles tradition, whose last factories closed in 1980.[142]

The 1950s crisis also brought industrial decentralization, reconversion, and political change to the Elbeuf region near Rouen. This time, however, the impetus for new industrialization came from the nationalized automaker Renault and only succeeded after a die-hard local resistance had been defeated. The fierceness of the conflict had two causes. One was the sheer distance between the social orders that came into contact. Unlike Reims, wool textiles were a veritable monoindustry around Elbeuf, counting for half of the area's employment in 1950. In addition, local manufacturers clung to a low-

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[141] Christian Brut, "Vie municipale à Reims: Expansion et pouvoir local, 1945-1975" (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris V, 1981), 141-203. Gilles Baillat et al., *Reims* (Paris: Editions Bonneton, 1990), 127.
[142] Layoffs started in 1950, but until 1951 no factories closed. It was the period from 1951-55 that saw the main layoffs; textile employment slipped from 5,000 in 1946 to 1,600 in 1962. Brut, "Vie municipale à Reims," 187, 203-244; Clause and Oudart, "La nouvelle croissance de Reims," 391-395, 400, 405-407; Baillat et al., *Reims*, 299-300, 305-306.

wage, paternalistic production model, which was clearly incompatible with a sizeable Renault factory. Whereas most Parisian companies aligned their salaries to going local rates when they decentralized—an approach that placated local manufacturers while padding national manufacturers' own bottom line—the nationalized automaker offered relatively similar rates in its different plants. In addition, Renault was a prominent center of working-class militancy and Communist politics, an equally grave threat to Elbeuf's existing employers.[143]

The second cause of the Elbeuf showdown was the decidedly undemocratic means Renault used to gain control over the region's economy. Renault had already attempted to install its new plant in several other locations, only to be thwarted by the resistance of local elites. The MRU even began to fear that a new defeat would lead to "une remise en cause de la politique d'aménagement du territoire"—ironically sunk by the resistance of provincial interests, not by the defenders of Paris' industrial base.[144] Renault thus took a different tack in its new decentralization effort, quietly prospecting a site in the town of Cléon, in the Elbeuf area, and secretly buying land through the intermediary of local notaries. It failed to inform the MRU, the prefect who represented the government locally, and Cléon officials. Renault's land purchases soon stalled, however, exposing its program. A coalition of Elbeuf's textile owners then bought a strategically located plot of land, blocking Renault's whole operation.[145]

Renault's secret maneuvering provoked an outcry, and the call for local defense initially garnered broad support. Elbeuf's textile owners rallied a mix of politicians and sympathetic government officials to their cause. Farmers and even textile workers sitting

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[143] On the installation of Renault in Cléon, see Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975);" Francis Concato, "L'appareil productif elbeuvien face au changement," *Etudes Normandes* 2 (1987): 70-76; Alain P. Michel, ed., *Renault Cléon: 50 ans de fabrications mécaniques* (Boulogne-Billancourt: ETAI, 2008), 6-32. For an insider's account, see the unpublished account of Houdin, who was one of the original Renault maintenance technicians who left Billancourt to launch Cléon and became involved in the town's municipal affairs. René Houdin, *Renault Cléon dans l'agglomération elbeuvienne* (unpublished work), 1-16. There are also small MRU and Industry Ministry dossiers in CAC 19770911/54 and CAC 19900583/5.

[144] Concato, "L'appareil productif elbeuvien," 72.

[145] Public control over the nationalized carmaker proved as useful for conservative politics as for spurring decentralization. Provincial politicians could denounce the unfair competition from the state-subsidized firm and lobby the government to control it. Concretely, a Normandy MP made sure that rules on state purchases were applied to Renault, preventing it from fairly competing with Cléon's wool coalition in bidding for the land it needed. Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975)," 187-188; Concato, "L'appareil productif elbeuvien," 70-76.

on Cléon's municipal council helped form a league opposing the automaker. They were relayed on the national scene by the department's prefect, incensed at having been bypassed by Renault; a powerful centrist MP and minister, André Marie; and even the Conseil des communes de l'Europe, which cried out in defense of local autonomy. This coalition agitated a fear of outsiders, Communists, and votes for the Left. It stood poised to defend low-wage business interests against new industrialization.[146]

But a ferocious wave of layoffs in the first half of the 1950s—which cut the Elbeuf area's textiles employment by half in just a few years—turned both local and national sentiment against Elbeuf's manufacturers. The Cléon affair now shaped up as a battle that pitted progressive forces against a small hold-out of factory owners clinging to a system which submitted workers to low wages, chronic unemployment, and company paternalism. Cléon's mayor, himself a textile worker, rallied almost immediately to Renault's side (and to the Socialist Party). So did Normandy's Socialist MPs and the Confédération générale du travail (CGT), which called upon the government to use all possible means to overcome local opposition.[147] Cléon and nearby towns had begun investing in housing and in the other accoutrements of expansion, so the fate of local finances now depended on the factory's realization. In just a couple of years, most of Normandy's politicians dropped the textiles owners and rallied to Renault's promise of jobs, housing, and investments, lobbying the government to see the plant through. Those who did not were sidelined.[148]

A nationalized company and state intervention stood to empower workers, the Left, and progrowth local authorities. But Renault's opponents still owned the land. On this point, Cléon became an affair of national importance, finally bringing France's political stars into alignment for the passage of an expropriation law. Cléon spectacularly illustrated an argument the MRU had been pushing for years: through the private control

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[146] Daumas and Loubet recount the main shift in political responses, but the thickest details are in Houdin. A prominent radical, Marie was vice-president of the government (*vice-président du Conseil*) in the late 1940s as well as Minister of Justice and a relatively longstanding Minister of Education into the mid-1950s. "André Marie," website of the Assemblée nationale, URL: http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/biographies/IVRepublique/marie-andre-03121897.asp

[147] CGT-FO, tract, December 1951, CAC 19900583/5.

[148] The government replaced its anti-Renault prefect and the leaders of the preservation movement in Cléon's municipal council resigned. Gibel, "Note d'information relative aux projets d'extension de la Sté SIMCA à Poissy," 14 September 1954, CAC 19770911/55.

of land, a socially progressive decentralization could be blocked by a handful of hold-outs. *Le Monde* and other newspapers rallied to expropriation, demanding "un vote rapide du projet de loi déposé par M. Claudius-Petit."[149] However, Parliament still dragged its feet for two long years, only approving the law in August 1953. Even then, the MRU proceeded delicately to reassure France's pro-property politicians that expropriation would be a matter of last recourse. Only in 1956, when Renault almost scrapped the Cléon plant out of frustration, did the MRU and the area's prefect move ahead with expropriation proceedings. This threat of state expropriation finally forced textiles manufacturers to cut a deal.[150]

Once Renault's arrival became inevitable, debates turned to the issue of its place in the regional economy. Elbeuf's textile owners embarked on a new project: trying to forge a mixed-industry future. Seizing on the MRU's own planning discourse that decentralization should bring a harmonious integration of old and new elements, they twisted Renault's arm to limit its poaching of skilled wool workers. Despite the automaker's initial promises, however, Renault had the just effect its opponents initially feared. As the demand for cars massively expanded, the auto factory increased recruitment, drove up wages, and drained off the textile sector's best workers. With local manufacturers unable to wean themselves off of their low-wage economic model, competition from Renault hastened the disappearance of the century-old wool industry. Cars became Elbeuf's new monoindustry.[151]

The broader apprehension in Cléon about Renault's arrival also persisted after the opening of the factory. The town was long marred by poor relations between local residents and the company agents Renault sent to run the new plant. The largely Parisian management referred to provincial workers as "beet-pickers" (*betteraviers*) and other

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[149] "Pour une décentralisation industrielle," *Le Monde*, 4 May 1952. Concato speaks of "vaste campagne de presse" in favor of RNUR. Concato, "L'appareil productif elbeuvien," 72. See also Karine Brandel, "L'Implantation de l'usine Renault à Cléon (1950-1958)" (masters thesis, Université de Rouen, 1996), 78, 82.

[150] Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975)," 186. On the meanders of the Cléon expropriation, see the letters from 1955-1956 in Eugène Claudius-Petit archives CHAN 538AP/82.

[151] Ibid., 189-190, 194; Concato, "L'appareil productif elbeuvien," 76-77; Brandel, "L'Implantation de l'usine Renault à Cléon," 90-91.
Houdin notes a shift from unemployment to global labor shortage in the area, which preoccupied both firms and the state's Labor Direction. Houdin, *Renault Cléon*, 33.

derogative terms. Tensions in the factory spilled over into the realms of housing, shopping, sports clubs, and even schooling. One Renault director summed up the first decade of the plant's history as a "[clash] de deux mondes."[152] Economic decline and an expropriation law had given the MRU a new tool to overcome the defensive politics of local elites, but they did not solve the problem, highlighted by early planners, of integrating natives and outsiders, rural and urban "civilizations."

The textiles crisis shaped national legislation in other ways. Étienne Hirsch at the CGP used the rapid decline of the Vosges' textiles industry to win the first new credits for reconversion.[153] A politician from another textiles region pushed even harder for new subsidies. Jean-Marie Louvel represented the Normandy department of Calvados and after 1953 was a municipal councilor in its capital, Caen (where he was elected mayor in 1959). As in Reims or Cléon, Caen's elites shifted from an indifferent, even hostile stance toward outside industry to a policy of actively bidding for Parisian factories after textiles jobs plummeted and a dense rural population renewed its mass migration to the city.[154] However, Louvel played a particular role. He was also Minister of Industry, and as such he drew up legislation for a new reconversion and decentralization fund. Louvel lost his portfolio just as ministerial officials were reaching an agreement on the fund, in early 1954, but his basic proposition was recycled and implemented under the incoming government—ushering in the year of legislating that created the bulk of France's new regional development regime.[155]

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[152] Tensions in the factory between local workers and a "foreign" hierarchy spilled over into tensions over housing, shopping, sports clubs, and even schooling. It even shaped the May 1968 occupation of the factory. Houdin, *Renault Cléon*, 7, 24-40. Michel, ed., *Renault Cléon*, 30-31, 57-61.

[153] François Bloch-Lainé to Minister, "Objet: Fonds de développement et d'adaptation," 28 October 1952; minutes of Commission des investissements, 27 October 1952, CAEF B/33510.

[154] Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 140-189.

[155] Giscard d'Estaing, "Note sur la procédure d'élaboration du programme économique," CAEF 1A/390; Fourquet, *Les Comptes de la puissance*, 210. Louvel, now in the opposition, also put on his parliamentary cap and proposed the fund as a law. Louvel belonged to the MRP, which passed into opposition with Mendès France's government. The law he co-sponsored was only signed by members of the MRP. See the "Proposition de loi tendant à créer un fonds d'adaptation de l'industrie et de reclassement de la main-d'œuvre," 9 July 1954, *J.O., Documents parlementaires, AN*, no. 8872, located in CAEF B/16127. Louvel reorganized the Ministry of Industry to take up a new interventionist role. Ministry officials hoped to use the reconversion vogue to finally dote France with a veritable industrial policy and reclaim their own centrality in economic policy. Henri Rousso, "Le Ministre de l'Industrie dans le processus de planification. Une adaptation difficile (1940-1969)," in *De Monnet à Massé. Enjeux politiques et objectifs économiques dans le cadre des quatre premiers Plans (1946-1965)*, ed. Henri Rousso (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1986), 32.

French politicians' new willingness to challenge provincial manufacturers was a key ingredient in the shift away from the conservative industrialization programs of the early postwar years. It not only legitimated state pressure on Parisian industry to decentralize, but also broke the defensive politics that had too often thwarted their installation in the provinces. This shift toward a policy of rapid reconversion owed as much to changing forces on the ground—the collapse of traditional industries and workers' increasing refusal of bad pay—as it did to the modernization ideals invented since the late 1930s. The same was true for the expansion of the government's commitment to providing new jobs to a much larger segment of the French population: rural residents and the other new workers of provincial France.

The Rural West

Immediate industrial unemployment took center stage in 1952-54, but the broader regional imbalance of jobs and workers was never far behind. By the mid-1950s, doubts about whether rural France had surplus labor gave way to a historic polarization that provided the framework for French regional policy until the late 1960s: a majority of French departments had a net excess of job-seekers, while Paris continued to suffer labor shortages. In fact, the provincial labor surplus concerned two overlapping groups. First, there was the issue of agricultural France per se. Farm mechanization, low incomes, and changing lifestyles were poised to revolutionize a society of small farmers, pushing millions of people off the land.[156] Second, the baby boom generation and the increase in women's salaried work created an increase in the French workforce whose geography also did not match the location of new job creation.[157]

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[156] In 1963, France had 21 percent of its population earning its living from farming, as opposed to just 6 percent in the U.S. and nearly as many commercial farms as its neighbor across the Atlantic, which had four times as many people to feed. Niles M. Hansen, *French Regional Planning* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 160.

[157] Patrick Pelata traced the regional imbalance of jobs and labor of the 1950s and 1960s in detail using INSEE data. Industrial jobs were being created the fastest in Paris and the northeast. Meanwhile, three of France's main available labor pools were heavily located outside of those traditional industrial bastions.

- Poor farmers and farm workers—the agricultural labor surplus strictly defined—and redundant workers in declining industries were disproportionately represented in under-industrialized areas.
- Young workers became primordial with the arrival of the baby boom generation on the job market after the early 1960s. France's "fertile crescent"—a longstanding geography of areas with high birth-rates that remained operative until the late 1960s—stretched across northern France. But until the 1960s, new job creation seemed on pace to provide more than enough employment in the industrial northeast, and to far

Compared to industrial layoffs, this broader imbalance could seem like a less urgent matter. Polarization gradually gathered steam over the course of the 1950s and only reached its full force in the 1960s, as the government finally adopted measures for modernizing family farms, the baby boom generation entered the job market, and women massively entered the factory.[158] The Economic Council's recently created Regional Economies Commission also cited a political reason for delaying rural industrialization. As the economist Maurice Byé explained in October 1954, rural underdevelopment "ne présente pas de conséquences immédiates" because "les gens qui ont pris l'habitude d'être très pauvres risquent de conserver cette habitude un certain temps." By contrast, a local industrial crisis "est, dans l'immédiat, susceptible de faire beaucoup de bruit" and could drag down an entire local economy through a domino effect on other activities.[159]

Byé's stance soon became outdated. The rural labor surplus concerned far larger numbers of people than did industrial unemployment, which overall remained modest in postwar France. By 1955, government modernizers such as François Bloch-Lainé recognized that the state needed to start creating jobs now if it hoped to temper future polarization.[160] Officials began to speak of a historically unique window of geographic fluidity, in the late 1950s and 1960s, during which two scenarios were possible. The

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overwhelm the increase in birth rates in the Paris region. On the contrary, the Western half of the fertile crescent still had little endogenous industrial growth.

- Finally, women had high rates of industrial employment in the textiles regions in crisis, and early experiences showed that the decentralization of new branch plants allowed the mobilization of an important "latent" labor pool of women who could not migrate but were willing to work close to home. That idea, explicitly integrated in the Third Plan of 1959, was confirmed by later trends. Female industrial employment, which counted for a large percentage of new industrial workers—even furnishing the bulk of new French workers between 1968 and 1973—grew fastest in areas of heavy industrial decentralization.

In the opposite sense of all these social groups were immigrants, who played a crucial role during labor-market heat-ups. They acted as "une alternative au développement décentralisé," moving above all to France's dominant industrial centers, including two-thirds in the Paris region. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 24-47. A good summary is in Pierre Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires: L'économie d'archipel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005 [1996]), 30-33. For a longer period, see Félix Damette and Jaques Scheibling, *Le Territoire français: Permanences et mutations* (Paris: Hachette, 2003), 181-201.

[158] See previous note.

[159] M. Perlet even thought that there were "des régions où tout développement est impossible, la population ne souhaitant pas sortir de sa condition misérable." As such, "Les régions moins développées peuvent attendre l'étude qui aura été faite, au moins pour celles qui, précisément, commencent à devenir malheureuses et en prennent conscience." CE, Commission des affaires économiques et du Plan, minutes of 6 October 1954, 7, 24-25, CHAN Ivry-4.

[160] In 1956, the regional scientist Joseph Lajugie estimated that 80,000 baby-boom youth would be put on the job market by 1959 and 200,000 of them in the longer term, even as North African immigration was picking up and productivity savings were eliminating industrial jobs. Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 394.

attraction of the Paris region could drain the human forces of the provinces toward the capital, as had happened before 1930, but the provincial labor surplus could also provide a powerful magnet for attracting Parisian manufacturers to the provinces. In sum, job disparities could lead to either a catastrophic regional polarization or balanced development.[161]

In the provinces, this argument was pioneered in Brittany, the rural region where the new lobbying for industrialization was the most spectacular. Economic decline and strong emigration were old problems in Brittany, dating back to the nineteenth century.[162] Early regionalists anticipated the complaints of their postwar successors: the West was France's internal colony, serving as a labor reservoir and a source of raw materials for the Northeast. But interwar elites showed little interest in the arrival of outside industry; they were motivated more by a ruralist ideology of sociopolitical preservation. Breton manufacturers mostly demanded the state defense of existing industries from outside competition, while regionalists focused on promoting Brittany's cultural and political autonomy.[163]

After the war, however, a broad range of politicians and boosters rallied to the idea that only the installation of new manufacturing could solve the region's poverty and provide jobs for local residents forced to migrate. In 1950, a mixed group of Breton elites founded the most powerful regional development organization in France, the Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts bretons (CELIB). The CELIB boasted an unbeatable mix of political clout and economic lobbying. Its development initiatives brought together a vast and ecumenical set of local governments, politicians, business

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[161] Ibid.: 374-378. In 1955, the economic modernizer François Bloch-Lainé spoke of "deux échéances fatales [pour l'économie française] qui sont la libération des échanges...et l'arrivée à l'âge du travail d'un plus grand nombre d'ouvriers." The latter meant that, "[l]a création d'activités nouvelles dans les provinces se confond presque, comme objectif, avec l'expansion économique." Bloch-Lainé, "Réformes de structure," 97-99, 108-110. In 1959, the MRU's Jean Faucheux despaired, "[i]l reste moins de cinq ans" to set the bases for decentralized growth before the baby boom generation hit the job market. Faucheux, *La décentralisation industrielle*, 190-191, 201.

[162] Pasquier, "La Régionalisation française revisitée," 110; Michel Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton 1950-2000* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1993), 15.

[163] Romain Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions: Une comparaison France/Espagne* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 34-45; Florent Le Bot and Fabrice Marzin, "Le Mai 1968 breton et ses acteurs face à une révolution pompidolienne en matière d'économie des territoires," in *1968, entre libération et libéralisation: La grande bifurcation*, ed. Danielle Tartakowsky and Michel Margairaz (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 238-240; Yann Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne: La région et l'État (1950-2000)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), 169, 171-2, and chapter 7.

groups, and labor unions, whose perennial congresses had the aura of an *ancien régime* provincial assembly. During the 1950s, Breton politicians formed a tight-knit parliamentary coalition which excelled at using the tight majorities of the Fourth Republic and the insider lobbying of ministerial services to the region's advantage.[164]

From the beginning, the CELIB's leaders proselytized the need for aggressive industrialization, which would be fueled in large part by decentralization from Paris. René Pleven, the CELIB's longstanding president and a prominent national politician, declared in 1951, during one of the coalition's first debates: "nous sommes tous passés jusqu'ici à côté du vrai problème, celui de la Bretagne qui perd ses hommes et qui va vers le déclin; je compte désormais m'y consacrer." For Pleven, rapid industrialization was the only viable solution.[165] Two years later, the CELIB's first regional development plan claimed that Brittany needed to create between 5,000 and 6,000 new industrial jobs per year in order to keep migration rates steady while farm departures, industrial layoffs, and baby boomers flooded the labor market.[166]

In the early years, enthusiasm for industrialization was uneven. The region's capital Rennes led the way. A minority of city elites—in particular at the Chamber of Commerce—began to organize for new industrialization at war's end. The creation of the CELIB broadened this ambition, since Rennes boosters played a key role in the new organization and the capital was Brittany's best asset for attracting Parisian manufacturers: Rennes was located at the extreme east of the region and boasted its best urban amenities. This mix of progrowth politics and a good geographic location ensured that Rennes had one of the highest growth rates in France and captured nearly all of Brittany's decentralization jobs until the early 1960s.[167]

Not all Breton elites were as enthusiastic about new industrialization. In the port town of Lorient, war and reconstruction had injected new entrepreneurs into the local mix; like Rennes, the city nabbed an early FNAT industrial park. But it was only at the

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[164] Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 111-125; Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions*, 34-45.
[165] Joseph Martray, *Vingt ans qui transformèrent la Bretagne: L'épopée du CELIB* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1983), 39.
[166] Comité d'étude et de liaison des intérêts bretons, *Rapport d'ensemble sur un plan d'aménagement, de modernisation et d'équipement de la Bretagne, 1954-1958* (Paris: Imprimerie la Mouette, 1953), 7, 14. See also Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 333.
[167] Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 186-187; Henri Fréville, *Un acte de foi: Trente ans au service de la Cité* (Rennes: Éditions Sepes, 1977), 21-23, 58.

beginning of the 1960s that the proponents of industrial decentralization conquered Lorient's CCI from traditional manufacturers. Along with another port city, Brest, they hired new industrialization experts (including Gravier) and eventually took control of regional institutions, pushing aside the pioneers in Rennes. Meanwhile, a number of smaller towns dominated by local industrial or agricultural interests long maintained old policies of endogenous growth.[168]

The preparation of the Breton Plan of 1953 revealed these differences. According to the CELIB's journal, *La Vie bretonne*, "Les divers responsables de l'économie bretonne ont souligné, à chaque occasion, leur désir de susciter une oeuvre de modernisation sans bouleverser les structures profondes de la province." The goal, the journal continued, was therefore not to "chercher l'implantation d'une grande industrie" but to "faciliter l'installation des petites et moyennes industries de transformation dans nos chefs-lieux, voilà des ambitions qui restent à notre mesure." *La Vie bretonne* even praised the state's limited means for industrial decentralization as insurance against excessive change: "cette limitation même des ressources nous garantit contre les entreprises hasardeuses qui viseraient à détruire un système des plus complexes."[169]

Despite these conservative currents, however, Brittany boasted an exceptionally strong support for industrialization. The president of the regional development committee for neighboring Poitou-Charentes underscored this point in 1956. He told state planners that if his organization had floated a program to bring outside industry into Poitou like the CELIB had done, "on aurait eu contre soi tous les éléments de la population, depuis les industriels menacés de conversion jusqu'aux parlementaires,

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[168] Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 172, 183-187, 190-191. For a closer look at how industrial decentralization fit into the evolution of the Fougères shoe industry, see Florent Le Bot and Laurence Héry, "La chaussure en France au XXe siècle: la fin d'une industrie? Comparaison du SPL fougerais et de l'entreprise Noël à Vitré, face aux crises des années 1930 et des années 1970-1980," in *1974-1984, une décennie de désindustrialisation?* , ed. Pierre Lamard and Nicolas Stoskopf (Paris: Picard, 2009), 220-223, 226. In 1952, representatives of some of the region's main industrial centers drew up their possibilities for new industrialization. For example, the port cities of Saint Malo and Brest, where the end of big reconstruction building was creating unemployment, and the Fougères shoe-making district expressed their interest. Comité d'étude et de liaison des intérêts bretons, *Rapport d'ensemble*; "Les Chambres de Commerce dressent le bilan des possibilités industrielles de la Bretagne," *La Vie bretonne* (1952).

[169] "Les Chambres de Commerce dressent le bilan des possibilités industrielles de la Bretagne." Indeed, one of the CELIB's leaders, Michel Phlipponneau, complained that Brittany's elites had requested so few state subsidies for industry in their 1953 regional plan that they reproduced the First Plan's "disproportion écrasante" between state subsidies to industry in Brittany and in other regions. He ordered the CELIB's industrial commission go back to the drawing board and establish an "inventaire complémentaire" of requests. *La Vie bretonne* (June, 1954).

jusqu'à l'administration préfectorale, et...l'ensemble des chambres de commerce et des chambres d'agriculture."[170]

The CELIB's leaders pioneered the idea that the postwar imbalance between labor and job growth would be a turning point in French history, for better or for worse. René Pleven summarized the pessimistic scenario in 1961, in an influential book on France's regional problem. He warned the government that Brittany's traditional emigration was becoming a veritable regional exodus. Already in 1946, more than 540,000 Bretons lived outside the region—four times as many as lived in Rennes—and despite high birth rates, Brittany's population had decreased by more than 200,000. Pleven even raised the specter of "un phénomène émigratoire de type irlandais," in which poor Bretons would migrate not only to Paris, but also to Canada and the U.S. Pleven declared that such excessive migration would have disastrous consequences, causing Brittany to miss its window for economic takeoff and enter a spiral of depopulation, aging, and decadence. This demography-led vision of economic development recalled Gravier's theory of provincial "desertification."[171]

Pleven warned that excess migration would also create political unrest, perhaps even a defensive ethnic regionalism. Brittany was not the only region reduced "au rôle de fournisseurs de main-d'œuvre et de denrées agricoles" for the East, Pleven said, but

> Il existe un fait psychologique, social, politique qui s'appelle le tempérament breton. Celui-ci accepte de moins en moins que la Bretagne soit considérée comme une réserve de main-d'œuvre, de soldats, de marins, de petits serviteurs de l'État, recrutés ou mobilisés selon les besoins. La France va vers des déchirements qu'elle ne soupçonne pas, si elle ne donne pas à la Bretagne la possibilité de s'épanouir et de jouer son rôle dans l'essor français.

The national management of labor migrations was more than a question of Keynesian economics.[172] Pleven's alarming vision of a France torn asunder by excessive migrations was the opening salvo of a more militant regionalism, which gathered steam in the 1960s

[170] Minutes of the Commission des économies régionales, CES, 6 June 1956, CES archives, CHAN CE 503.
[171] René Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1961), 19-37. For the evolution of the Bretons' figures, see Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 333.
[172] Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne*, 19-37.

and 1970s, based on the notion that provincial populations had a right to "travailler au pays."[173]

Opposite this pessimistic scenario, the CELIB also propagandized the notion that Brittany's labor surplus could be a historic opportunity for regional development, by enticing industry out of the overheated Paris region.[174] The argument was perfectly summarized by geographer Michel Phlipponneau, the *éminence grise* of the CELIB, in a 1956 booklet destined for administration and business groups in Paris. Phlipponneau wrote that cheap labor was Brittany's principle resource. In a poor rural region, with relatively few natural resources aside from agriculture and weak markets to attract investors, due to its ambient poverty,

> c'est sa richesse en hommes qui constitue le plus puissant facteur de son industrialisation....cet énorme réservoir de main-d'œuvre peut plus particulièrement attirer des établissements issus d'une décentralisation industrielle et ne recherchant spécialement ni matières premières locales, ni débouchés régionaux importants.[175]

Phlipponneau made it clear that the demographic situation of the mid-1950s presented a unique window of opportunity, which would soon close down: "Les difficultés actuelles de recrutement de la main-d'œuvre (départ des Nord-africains, rappel des disponibles, 'classes creuses' de la dernière guerre arrivant en âge de trouver un emploi) peuvent avantager les régions de fort surpeuplement agricole."[176]

Phlipponneau was unambiguous about the fact that Brittany's population was a reserve army of rural labor for Parisian manufacturers and administration officials to exploit. The region's unparalleled glut of workers would keep recruitment easy, wages low, and unions on the defensive. The CELIB advertisement explicitly undercut the high salaries and strong unions of Paris region workers.[177] It was also a beggar-thy-neighbor competition with Brittany's main rival for investments: the ring of rural departments immediately surrounding Paris. The CELIB warned manufacturers, "ces plaines de la

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[173] Robert Lafont, *La Révolution régionaliste* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967).
[174] The recipe worked. As Michel Phlipponneau wrote forty years later, the mix of rapid growth in Paris-based industries, Western labor, and state aid for decentralization created a phase of rapid industrialization that has not been repeated since—despite improvements in regional infrastructure and boosterism since the Trente Glorieuses. Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 127.
[175] Michel Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités d'implantations industrielles en Bretagne* (Rennes: CELIB, 1956), 29.
[176] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 29.
[177] Ibid., 35.

région parisienne sont de véritables déserts démographiques." Rapid industrialization there would cause labor shortages—and thus recruitment headaches, an increase in labor power, and "[des] salaires...très proche de ceux de l'agglomération parisienne."[178]

The CELIB was soon circulating such promises widely, in glossy advertisements with titles like "Bretagne: pays de main-d'œuvre."[179] Packaging labor for outside investors went beyond mere slogans and promises. The CELIB joined the fad of publishing practical guides for potential investors. Its *Inventaire des possibilités d'implantations industrielles en Bretagne* (1956) contained all the information a manufacturer needed to make a profitable decentralization, in 163 pages. Much of that information dealt with how to take advantage of local differences among workers. The *Inventaire* provided data on individual towns' amount of excess labor, going salaries for different categories of workers, and even indicators of worker militancy and business climate: unionization rates, the frequency of strikes and their outcomes, and the color of the local political majority.[180] When a manufacturer was ready to invest, the CELIB gave him personalized treatment. The boosters' new welcome office was a place where a prospective employer could discreetly demand, as one company did, help finding "une petite ville...[avec] une main-d'œuvre stable et peu chère...On souhaite ne pas s'exposer à la venue sur place d'une industrie nouvelle et importante pratiquant de hauts salaires, qui drainerait vers elle la main-d'œuvre locale."[181]

The CELIB's effort to package its rural labor surplus for Parisian industry was in direct continuity with the conservative stances of the Vichy studies and early postwar planners. In effect, Phlipponneau did his geography thesis under the tutelage of Pierre George, who had first mapped out France's rural labor reserve—and pegged Brittany as a prime target for new industrialization—in 1943. More broadly, new expansion committees like the CELIB faced much the same imperative as the DGEN and the MRU: ensuring that decentralization was profitable for Parisian manufacturers and did not threaten entrenched local interests, which could sink plans for new industrialization. In other respects, however, the CELIB's mobilization overturned the early conservatism of

[178] Ibid., 29.
[179] "Bretagne: pays de main-d'œuvre," CAEF B/16350.
[180] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 35 and part 2.
[181] COMASEC to BEI, 27 November 1963, ADIV 30J/124.

state planners. Breton leaders were concerned with provincial uplift, not decongesting Paris. They pioneered a language of rights, in which the government had an obligation to deliver jobs to impoverished communities—not just the prerogative to do so when such a program fit business needs. At a time when government planners such as Claude Gruson were still proclaiming their ignorance about the evolution of France's agricultural population, the CELIB began delivering concrete calculations of Brittany's demographic surplus and lobbying Paris for precise job-creation targets.[182] Finally, Brittany's Left politicians and union leaders supported the CELIB's industrialization program, initially viewing the advertisement of cheap labor as a necessary evil, not an ideal like the experts at Vichy.

The Breton initiatives thus illustrated two main tensions which would structure the new quest to bring factory jobs to provincial populations. First, government efforts remained in the ambiguous middle ground between the national exploitation of a labor surplus and a program of regional uplift that promised full employment, wage equalization, and the fulfillment of social rights which national reforms announced but low-wage economies undermined. The frontier between exploitation and empowerment was a durable tension in the movement of Fordist decentralization.

Secondly, the issue of targeted job creation underpinned a new planning relationship between provincial authorities and the state administration that was by turns cooperative and conflict-ridden.[183] In principle, both sides had an interest in matching new jobs to French workers. In reality, planners in Paris immediately set limits on local employment and reduced migration as priorities for industrial policy—asserting the primacy of growth and competitiveness—while provincial coalitions like the CELIB took an ever more aggressive stance that all regions and towns had a right to industry. Estimates of demographic and employment growth quickly surpassed the realm of expert calculations created by the DGEN and the MRU, becoming the central terms in a sweeping regional development policy with tremendous consequences for private industry and state resources.

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[182] Untitled Gruson group note, April 1954, 40-43, Jean Saint-Geours personal archives, BHMF, 6 = F.
[183] Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions*, 45.

Conclusion

At war's end, Louis Chevalier wrote that although rural regions like Brittany and the Poitou had a labor surplus for new industrialization, "il ne peut être question de précipiter dans ces fins fonds du ruralisme une industrie excessive et envahissante." Industrial decentralization should aim "seulement de réveiller quelques localités endormies et d'y placer avec prudence quelques usines qui puissent s'accorder avec les conditions habituelles économiques et morales de ces vieilles civilisations paysannes."[184] In the early 1950s, the MRU was still wringing its hands about whether all regions could be industrialized. A few years later, however, this was a moot issue. Keynesian modernizers such as Jean Saint-Geours spoke of transferring tens of thousands of provincial men and women into new manufacturing jobs every year.[185] Progrowth politicians like René Pleven claimed new jobs as a right and rapidly organized to lobby for its implementation.

The continuities between these different projects underscored a core tension of industrial decentralization in the mid-1950s. The defense of provincial business interests, the use of depressed salaries to attract outside industry, and agrarian social ideals remained as present as ever as state officials moved forward on designing new policies. But decentralization had a clear progressive potential, which was evident in the concrete push for reforms. It was the need to overcome low-wage textile interests in Cléon that finally pushed through a land expropriation law, Brittany's ecumenical coalition which delivered the first hard estimates of rural job needs, and the concrete plight of factory closings that led administration officials to denounce the Finance Ministry's resistance to state intervention. The tensions apparent in early debates—between social uplift and

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[184] Louis Chevalier, "Localisation industrielle et peuplement," *Population* 1 (January-March, 1946): 30.

[185] In early 1955, the CERES quoted an unidentified document—either by government planners or the business-linked think tank CEGOS—that demanded 100,000 annual transfers from agriculture and declining industry to expanding sectors. "Un Impératif économique et social." In other cases, if the estimations of the mid-1950s were substantially higher than in the previous decade, they remained much smaller than later decentralization goals. In 1953, Gravier said that the CELIB's new goal of four to five thousand new industrial jobs per year was designed to bring Brittany's farm population to under 50 percent of its total population and that the "reconversion" of the Vosges textiles industry would only affect, at term, a third of the textiles workforce. "Vous voyez," he told his students at the École Nationale d'Administration, "que nous sommes loin des 900.000 chômeurs des zones de dépression britanniques." Jean-François Gravier, "L'action économique régionale et le deuxième plan de modernisation et d'équipement: cours commun technique" (course lectures, 1953), 30-32. In fact, at term French agriculture alone liberated some 600,000 men and 200,000 women to the industrial sector; the continued decline of the agricultural population constantly surprised planners. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 43.

second-class development—could only be worked out in the design of state policies and in the fight over their implementation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Regional Development Orthodoxies, 1954-1958

In 1954 and 1955, the regional problem went through an institutional and discursive breakthrough. The French government proclaimed regional disparities one of the nation's top economic problems and passed a series of ambitious policies that established the bases for two decades of *aménagement du territoire*. The foundation of these policy measures was the new sense that France was in the throes of an unprecedented regional crisis. The relatively limited problem of local unemployment that justified the crafting of new industrialization programs in the summer of 1954 gave way, in less than a year, to the notion that the nation was split into two Frances—one modern, the other backward—whose divergent development tracks posed a peril for national unity as well as a threat of economic decline. This territorial rupture was decried in ever more feverish terms over the next decade. It allowed the proponents of *aménagement du territoire* to finally drive forward plans for an elaborate development regime, which would redistribute growth to the rural West and other priority regions while undertaking a holistic social and economic modernization of the national territory.

The ideas and programs of these years drew much of their inspiration from the foundational planning visions of the 1940s, but they also brought important ruptures. First of all, planners increasingly repudiated much of Gravier's conservative project of accommodating change within the traditional structures of rural and small-town France. Indeed, by the turn of the 1960s leading administration figures wanted to replace the provincial past entirely, with an abstract, "functional" space of big cities and communications infrastructure. Sprawling metropolitan areas would replicate in rural regions much of the urban-industrial concentration that *aménagement du territoire* had originally been invented to fight.[1] In addition, thinking about the geography of France's regional problem shifted. The early work on *aménagement du territoire* had been

[1] On this transition between early initiatives and 1960s regional policies, see Clyde Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community: Planning, Politics and Social Context* (New York: Wiley, 1984).

focused on the split between Paris and the provinces, and between city and countryside. After 1954, planners and the French public thought just as often in terms of a nation divided into two big regions—the more industrial northeast and the rural southwest. This shift in geographic imaginaries overlapped with a shift in political fears: government decentralizers' initial focus on reforming the radicalized working class of the Paris region gave way to the menace of the backwards provincial, who by turn resisted modernity and revolted against his increasing marginalization from postwar society. The Poujade revolt of small property owners brought into the political mainstream the notion that the most dangerous radicalism was now in the rural Right, not in the urban Left.

In this chapter, I briefly examine the new regional policies of 1955 and then discuss four discourses that shaped the renewed sense of crisis and the debates on how the state should remedy it. The first is what I call France's regional development orthodoxy.[2] By that I mean a set of core assumptions and principles enshrined as official government doctrine in the 1955 legislation and broadly shared by several key constituencies: government planners, the provincial politicians who demanded greater regional development spending, and a new field of regional economists and development experts. The central tenets of this thinking were that regional redistribution was in the nation's best economic interest, as well as being a matter of social justice and political unity; that poor regions and traditional mindsets could be modernized along the lines of Europe's dynamic economic core; and that it was the national state's responsibility to fund and oversee much of this project. The debates over the 1955 legislation immediately underscored that translating such principles into practice would give rise to intense conflicts; by the late 1960s, moreover, voices on the Left and the doubters of redistribution's effectiveness challenged some of the orthodoxy's key tenets. Nonetheless, the principle of state-led equalization held fast as a framework of policy debates for two decades.

The other three discourses that I discuss below shaped this regional development orthodoxy. One was the revival of the "two Frances" idea. The idea's history highlights

[2] To borrow from Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard's idea of a "development orthodoxy," Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard, "Introduction," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 2.

the importance of shifting conceptual paradigms for political debates: first invented in the nineteenth century, the two Frances idea long fell out of favor, but when it was revived in 1954 it suddenly became a dominant framework for scholarly analysis and concrete planning. The two Frances notion was a Manichean conception of territory: there was a modern France and a backward France, set on two divergent tracks. This dichotomous thinking was reinforced by the concept of development, which had been invented over the long 1940s in colonial empires and poor countries before being imported to metropolitan France in the mid-1950s. Like *aménagement du territoire*, the development idea encompassed specific economic issues, such as industrial reconversion and agricultural modernization, into a broad vision of social change. But unlike France's idiosyncratic notion of territorial planning, development emphasized that there were universal criteria for measuring and recipes for achieving modernization—not the least of which were the rapid shrinkage of France's vast peasantry and the use of "growth poles" to organize territorial development. Perhaps above all, comparing French regions to African and Asian territories radically reinforced the stigmatization of backwardness as well as the sense of unprecedented economic possibilities; this is a discussion I prolong in the following chapter, on empire and decolonization. Finally, I discuss the commonplace notion that regional change required a transformation in the psychology of ordinary citizens. This thinking, too, often had a Manichean strand to it. Traditional mindsets needed to become modern; this "awakening" had to be coordinated with the more concrete aspects of economic projects, otherwise development programs would fail and Frenchmen disappointed by setbacks would resist further change.

The growing sentiment of a France split in two by development trends carried debates about provinical modernization to a fevered pitch. The geographer Roger Brunet has observed that in France, the discussion of *aménagement du territoire* is often run through with apocalyptic visions of geographic rupture. This "dramatisation ordinaire des dysfonctions du territoire" justifies the treatment of social problems through spatial policies and the endless encroachment of state intervention into any "coins sombres" of the Hexagon that had previously escaped the administration's oversight.[3] Brunet intends his comment as a critique of technocratic overreach, but a wide range of groups staged

[3] Roger Brunet, *La France, un territoire à ménager* (Paris: Édition n°1, 1994), 42.

France's regional drama and demanded broader state intervention in the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, the most remarkable change after 1955 was how quickly a policy domain dominated by a small group of government experts and federalist elites was reappropriated by labor unions, small farmers, and above all an expanding set of regional boosters, all of whom denounced uneven development.

In 1961, the prominent Breton politician René Pleven set the tone for the upcoming decade with his book, *Avenir de la Bretagne*. Pleven declared that Brittany was tired of being a colony, claimed that the rural West "a droit à participer à l'expansion économique générale," and threatened to appeal to the European Community if Paris could not deliver on its promises of aid.[4] A small group of Vichy technocrats may have invented *aménagement du territoire*, but a decade later the work of dramatizing regional inequalities had become a very eclectic affair.

1. New Policies

Two legislative sessions in the fall of 1954 and the summer of 1955 traced out a broad agenda for state-led modernization. The top-down nature of this new regime can be misleading. Provincial pressure was crucial in getting the measures passed; and a number of new programs empowered local governments in their competition for jobs and investments. These bottom-up efforts soon rivaled national policies in terms of their impact on industrial restructuring, especially before the administration reasserted its control in a series of reforms after 1963.

Administration officials designed the new policies. Pierre Mendès-France and Edgar Faure, two premiers who shared a belief in the need for state-led modernization, received "special powers" from Parliament to decree their new economic agenda in the fall of 1954 and the spring of 1955.[5] Regional politicians like René Pleven weighed in on the decisions, however, and the new lobby of provincial development committees kept the government's feet to the fire.[6] More to the point, regional lobbying had penetrated the administration itself, thanks to the *cumul des mandats*—French politicians' ability to

[4] René Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1961), 256.
[5] Rule by government decree would again be used to expand regional policy during the Fifth Republic. André Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone: Villages, villes, régions* (Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1964), 184.
[6] Romain Pasquier, "La régionalisation française revisitée. Fédéralisme, mouvement régional et élites modernisatrices (1950-1964)," *Revue française de science politique* 53 (2003): 115.

simultaneously hold local and national offices. Edgar Faure himself led the economic expansion committee in his home district of Franche-Comté. His Finance minister, Pierre Pflimlin, played the same role in his native Alsace and presided over the national congress of the *Comités régionaux d'études pour la mise en valeur de la France* during his time in office.[7] As one Breton booster gleefully noted, "deux régionalistes...se trouvaient aux postes essentiels du gouvernement" during the crucial year of legislating on provincial modernization.[8]

The decrees of 1954-55 established France's main policy instruments. First of all, the government created a carrot-and-stick approach to industrial decentralization, simultaneously submitting factory construction in the Paris region to new government approval and subsidizing the shift of production through a mix of capital grants, preferential loans, and infrastructure. The most generous incentives were reserved for officially designated priority zones, determined by rates of unemployment and rural surplus labor.[9] Second, the 1955 legislation jump-started public and private investments in the provinces. Since the nineteenth century, regional capital markets had been weakened by national integration, and they were entirely wiped out by the Depression. In order to recreate a source of regional financing, the government subsidized the establishment of regional investment banks (sociétés de développement régional, SDR).[10] For local government programs, meanwhile, the administration designed a new brand of public-private partnerships (sociétés d'économies mixtes, SEM). The SEMs were intended not only to gather capital for development projects, but also to outmaneuver the traditional administration and provide local authorities with new development expertise.[11] Finally and most ambitiously, Pierre Pflimlin announced that the government would

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[7] "L'action des Comités Régionaux d'Etudes pour la mise en valeur de la France," L'Économie, 03/24/1955, press dossier, Sciences Po, France 506.

[8] Joseph Martray, *Vingt ans qui transformèrent la Bretagne: L'épopée du CELIB* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1983), 84-85.

[9] On the regime of state incentives, see Joseph Lajugie, Claude Lacour, and Pierre Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Dalloz, 1985), 184-202, 224-268; Pierre Durand, *Industrie et régions: L'aménagement industriel du territoire* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1972), 50-78.

[10] By 1964, the SDRs' operations counted for twenty percent of private investments in regional development programs. Their boards combined regional investors, public credit institutions, and big national banks headquartered in Paris. Niles M. Hansen, *French Regional Planning* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 58-60.

[11] June Burnham, "Local Public-Private Partnerships in France: Rarely Disputed, Scarcely Competitive, Weakly Regulated," *Public Policy and Administration* 16 (2001): 49-51.

design a comprehensive modernization plan for each of France's twenty-two new regions (which were designated in 1956). These *programmes d'action régionale* (PAR) would at once coordinate local initiatives and be integrated into the national plan.[12]

This new system for steering investments was highly centralized in a small set of government services. The Commissariat général du Plan (CGP) concentrated the regional planning process to an astonishing degree—initially even refusing to consult provincial politicians and businesses, lest these local interests taint the experts' rational judgments.[13] Power over state funding was equally centralized. The new Fonds de développement économique et social (FDES) doled out most indispensible financing: industrial decentralization grants, preferential loans, and state subsidies for public programs such as housing and urbanization.[14] Moreover, the director of the FDES, François Bloch-Lainé, was simultaneously the head of the state financial institution Caisse de dépôts et des consignations (CDC), which provided much of the funding and expertise for the new public-private partnerships and the SDRs, via its subsidiary, the Société Centrale pour l'Equipement du Territoire (SCET). The CGP, the FDES, and the SCET thus formed a concentrated nexus of control over French regional policy.[15]

In reality, however, central oversight overlapped with a more diffuse set of interventions, which soon rivaled planners' power over industrial location. Provincial municipalities and departments quickly expanded their efforts to attract factories. They obtained the right to offer tax abatements to decentralizing manufacturers in 1953—nearly two years before the national government began doling out its own subsidies—and local governments generalized this exoneration with alacrity.[16] They entered the business of providing industrial parks and buildings with equal enthusiasm. By 1965, the business magazine *Usine Nouvelle* estimated that there were one thousand municipally financed industrial zones—a number that exceeded the demand from businesses.[17] Regional

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[12] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 184-202; Martray, *Vingt ans*, 83-86, 91-95.
[13] Hugh Clout, *The Geography of Postwar France: A Social and Economic Approach* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1972), 29.
[14] Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 62-71.
[15] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 192-198.
[16] By 1965, only three French departments offered no abatement, and two-thirds of those located in the government's priority zones offered the legal maximum: a fifty percent exoneration for five years. Bertrand Jalon, *Primes et zones industrielles* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1967), 86-88.
[17] Cited in Ibid., 71. For a longer period, see Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 54-58, 71-73.

expansion committees and new *sociétés d'étude régionales*—public-private partnerships with dynamic-sounding names, such as Essor and Expansalp—hired professionals to advertise to potential investors and welcome those who decided to move.[18] In the early years of French regional development, these public authorities dominated the work of guiding manufacturers' relocation, but by the end of the 1950s a new field of private industrial location consultants had also emerged. These companies offered businesses "do-it-yourself" guides, databases with updated information on towns across the nation, and personalized guidance for their move to the provinces.[19]

It soon became apparent that this increasingly crowded field of actors had a contradictory implication for the government's new regional policy. On the one hand, administration officials needed local governments' help—to finance industrialization programs, to advertise their territories to Parisian manufacturers, and to do the legwork of helping investors set up shop in the provinces. On the other hand, new initiatives undermined central control. A 1962 government investigation showed that local incentives for industrial decentralization outweighed the state's decentralization subsidies in absolute terms, and were often more advantageous for a company than the government's most generous grants, reserved for priority zones.[20] Part of the problem was that national incentives remained anemic. The Finance Ministry maintained French subsidies for regional industrialization at one of the lowest rates in Europe.[21] In addition, the most dynamic government programs of the 1950s—the new public-private partnerships funded by the SCET—handed much power to local governments. And government prefects were often more interested in defending municipal decisions than in applying Paris' regional priorities. All told, the rapid rise of local incentives singularly weakened the administration's ability to shape the location of industry during the 1950s.[22]

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[18] IGEN, "Note sur les sociétés d'études régionales," 5 March 1957, CAEF B/16212; Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 57.
[19] In 1960, the government created France's largest industrial location consultant, the SODIC. It coexisted with other specialized companies, such as the SODIRP, SOFDI, UDIPA, DECENTREX, and the services of the SECA and the SOFRED. "Sociétés pour favoriser la décentralisation industrielle," October 1960, CAEF B/16210.
[20] "Bilan de l'action régionale," CAC 19930278/52;Jalon, *Primes et zones industrielles*, 85-86, 146-147.
[21] Ibid., 160-161.
[22] Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble sur le développement économique régional," 1961, CAEF 2404.

In a 1961 report to the government, a Finance inspector condemned "l'anarchie et la surenchère" of local interventions. Local promotion seemed to have reached a frenzied state. "Tout le monde cherche à prendre des contacts [avec des industries parisiennes]," the inspector noted. "Préfets, sous-préfets, personnalités politiques, maires, organes consulaires."[23] Several years later, the administration's new head of *aménagement du territoire*, Olivier Guichard, would write that provincial authorities had seized by a "peur du sous-développement relatif [qui] se multiplie jusqu'au mythe."[24] Local officials often had an explicitly entrepreneurial conception of their new development responsibilities. M. Stievenart, a businessman working for Brittany's regional development committee, proclaimed that it was necessary to "'vendre' la Bretagne aux industriels en instance de décentralisation." Surveying the promotional efforts of other French regions, Stievenart concluded: "[l]e dialogue qui va s'instaurer entre l'industriel et la région qui souhaite sa venue aura tous les caractères d'une opération commerciale entre un commerçant désireux de placer sa marchandise, et un client réticent à l'acheter, ce caractère étant encore accusé par le fait que le client est rare, les commerçants nombreux, et la concurrence vive."[25]

National officials denounced the waste and competition of the provincial pursuit of investments. Provincial officials were investing a rapidly growing amount of taxpayer money into expensive projects, such as industrial parks, that did not pan out. As they pinned local fortunes on nabbing a factory, municipalities became trapped in a logic of out-bidding and undercutting one another. "Un processus cumulatif est en effet déclenché," the Finance inspector observed; "plus le temps passe et plus les communes prennent conscience de leur retard, plus elles sont prêtes à payer le prix fort. Il y va pour certaines de leur prestige, pour d'autres de leur survie: Dinan a accordé une prime de 250 NF par emploi créé, Saint-Brieuc l'apprend et en accorde une de 750. Laval multiplie et cumule les avantages."[26] It soon became a remarkably common practice for municipalities to surpass legal limits in their incentives, or simply to offer subsidies that

[23] Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble," CAEF 2404.
[24] Guichard, "Problèmes actuels de l'aménagement du territoire," speech at Sciences Po, 11 March 1964, CAC 19930278/189.
[25] "Rapport de M. Stievenart sur les problèmes de la décentralisation industrielle en Bretagne," January 1962, 2, 9, CAEF B/16350.
[26] Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble," CAEF 2404.

were outlawed altogether: job-creation subsidies, loan guarantees, and interest repayments.[27]

The Finance inspector called for stronger central oversight. The proliferation of uncoordinated initiatives undermined the program of state-led development established in the 1955 legislation and exposed local communities to the vagaries of market forces. Yet the inspector correctly surmised the difficulties of such a top-down ideal. Provincial authorities—often faced with the immediate problem of local decline—jumped into regional development with greater gusto than most administrators in Paris. National institutions such as the SCET, ministries, and even prefects pushed municipalities into entrepreneurial initiatives more than they restrained them. And with the Finance Ministry determined to do development on the cheap, the administration's program for decentralization depended as much on local entrepreneurialism as provincial governments depended on nationnl aid.[28]

2. Spatial Keynesianism

Alongside these policy changes, the 1955 decrees enunciated France's regional development orthodoxy. It can be boiled down to several main precepts. First, uneven development was a global social and economic malady. Unemployment and out-migration were only symptoms; they reflected a package of problems ranging from inefficient business structures to low urbanization rates, poor capital penetration, and the apathy or defensiveness of local populations to the possibility of change. Secondly, geographic disparities would worsen over time without public intervention, but regional modernization programs could spread the development model of core areas out to France's lagging areas. Third, redistributive regional policies were in France's best economic interest. Uneven development had a net cost for the national economy. By contrast, modernization programs would push backwards areas into self-sustaining growth, in time eradicating the need for state aid—be it in the form of protectionism, social welfare, or further development aid.[29] These principles paved the way for poor

[27] Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble," CAEF 2404; "Bilan de l'action régionale," CAC 19930278/52.
[28] Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble," CAEF 2404.
[29] My analysis here has several inspirations. Fred Cooper and Randall Packard's analysis of the "new conceptual framework" of development in imperial and international institutions provides useful model for thinking about the uses of development ideas; as I show below, the two were in fact directly connected.

region coalitions to demand government aid and modernizers in the adminsitration to launch ambitious development programs, but they also provoked a backlash from a number of economic policymakers and the representatives of more prosperous areas that stood to lose from equalizing logics.

In early 1955, the Inspector General of the National Economy (IGEN), Louis Dufau-Peres, summarized this orthodoxy in a handful of internal notes justifying the government's new regional policy.[30] Dufau-Peres wrote that the French nation was increasingly split in two. While Paris and the northeast industrial zone continued to expand, a broad set of common ills affected "l'Ouest, le Sud-Ouest et une partie du Centre-Midi." These areas suffered from their distance from Europe's economic core. They all had problems of industrial unemployment, an excess agricultural population, and a swollen commercial sector. Their small, inefficient firms survived by paying low wages—tying the government's hands in national salary negotiations and thus poisoning relations with labor unions. In addition, these underdeveloped regions had a perverse relationship to state spending. Their inefficient firms generated insufficient tax revenues, even as they depended on state clientelism and costly protectionist policies to stay afloat.[31] Finally, Dufau-Peres believed that if the divergence in the development tracks of the two Frances was global—touching all aspects of the economy—it was also cumulative. The patterns of recession and recovery since 1950 showed growing

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Ibid. On European regional policies, see: Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 115, 130-131, 139, 143; Michael Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1998), 47; Stuart Holland, *Capital Versus the Regions* (London: Macmillan, 1976); Niles M. Hansen, *Public Policy and Regional Economic Development: The Experience of Nine Western Countries* (Cambridge: Ballinger Pub. Co., 1974). On the analogous goals of Southern liberal and New Deal efforts to develop the U.S. South, see Bruce Schulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South, 1938-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 3-8, 40-42, 50-51.

[30] Unless otherwise cited, what follows refers to "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux et Inspecteurs de l'Économie Nationale sur la situation économique à fin janvier 1954," 2/23/1954, AP PMF Économie, Carton 4; "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux et Inspecteurs de l'Économie Nationale sur la situation économique au début de mars 1955," 3/20/1955, CAEF B/16107. On the importance of these IGEN reports in framing the debate on the regional decrees of June 1955, see: "La politique d'expansion régionale, extrait du rapport de M. Gilles Gozard sur les crédits des affaires économiques et financières," Assemblée Nationale document # 3233, November 1956, located in CAEF B/16210.

[31] Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux et Inspecteurs de l'Économie Nationale sur la situation économique à fin janvier 1954," 23 February 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

geographic polarization. The IGEN expected that the creation of an integrated European market would only make matters worse.[32]

Dufau-Peres concluded that only a comprehensive modernization effort by the national state could reverse this trend. Moreover, the nation had an interest in doing so. Uneven development was a drag on France's overall economic expansion and cost more than an ambitious regional policy. Dufau-Peres' argument was "spatial Keynesianism" in its pure form.[33] The central justification for industrial decentralization was to assure the full employment of labor and capital. The workforce of France's southwestern half was underemployed while Paris and the northeast lacked labor, driving up wages there. The same was true of production capacity and the nation's social overhead. As more and more people left France's thinly populated areas, they abandoned useable housing and raised per capita operating costs on public services from roads to post offices. Meanwhile, migrants jammed into already overcharged cities, where the same types of infrastructure were already stretched far beyond their limits, and where the marginal cost of building more of them was exorbitantly high. The MRU had long complained that the charges of uneven development "écrasent les contribuables sous les charges fiscales," but now economic policymakers were ready to listen.[34] Dufau-Peres estimated that these regional imbalances had become one of main impediments to national growth. That was a pressing matter. In 1955, Pierre Pflimlin said the French economy was in danger of hitting a "seuil que déjà maintenant nous pressentons pour un avenir assez proche."[35]

The other side of the spatial Keynesian argument was that the underdevelopment of France's poorest regions made them an internal frontier for future expansion. Pierre Mendès France's economic brain trust—which contained emblematic technocrats like

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[32] For contemporary articles on the national costs of uneven development, see Joseph Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle, reconversion, aménagement du territoire," *Revue Juridique et Economique du Sud-Ouest* 2 (1956): 363-373; Marc Penouil, "Notes sur quelques aspects de la politique d'aménagement du territoire," *Cahiers de l'ISEA, série L.* 4 (1958).

[33] Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 115, 130-133.

[34] In areas where rural classrooms contained just a handful of students and post officers made the rounds of dispersed villages, "des subventions du pouvoir central, contre lesquelles s'insurge l'opinion des régions actives et peuplées, doivent venir pour de maigres résultats, à la rescousse des budgets locaux." This was a reason not to cut back on rural services, but rather to find a better "optimum de population" across the national territory. Ministère de la Reconstruction et de l'Urbanisme, *Pour un plan national d'aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950), 8-10.

[35] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 29-30 March 1955, 2066. See also Pflimlin "Conférence faite à la Société d'économie politique de Lyon le 3 octobre 1955," CAEF 5A/2.

Simon Nora and Jean Saint-Geours—considered this opportunity for new accumulation particularly important in 1954. These Keynesian modernizers hoped to jump-start investment as a counter-cyclical response to the downturn that followed the Korean War and believed that it would be easiest to quickly engage new state programs in underdeveloped regions. Nora used that argument to launch "regional development corporations" in the rural south.[36] Finally, low wages had kept consumer markets weak in France's poorest regions. Here, too, was an opportunity to do demand stimulus through regional policy. In his memoirs, Edgar Faure remembered regional policy as above all an attempt to seize this easily exploitable "pocket" of latent demand during the recession.[37] However, a broader program was necessary to pursue this spatial Keynesian policy in the long term. Pflimlin told the Assembly that France's expansion committees were drawing up a "tableau peut-être inédit...d'une France riche encore de ressources inemployées."[38] He ordered his services to funnel up program suggestions from prefects and local officials for the regional development plans decreed in 1955, which were intended to rationalize this inventory of possibilities for new accumulation.[39]

The basic precepts Dufau-Peres laid out in 1955 were providing the basis for a new corpus of regional economic and planning theory. This scholarship expanded on the early work of the Vichy studies, Gravier, and the MRU. In fact, these 1940s figures had explicitly promoted the training of new specialists who could improve their understanding of industrial location and expand it to a broader study of regional economies. However, if the 1950s scholars referenced the earlier "pioneers," they also established new canonical texts and institutions.[40] François Perroux emerged as the theoretical patron of the heterogeneous set of regional specialists. Perroux proclaimed in 1955, "La croissance n'apparaît pas partout à la fois"—a federating statement on the

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[36] Jean-Robert Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), 180-181. Nora had called for "une action décisive et spectaculaire" on regional development, but he got little else done before Mendès France left office. Nora, "note pour PMF sur la politique économique," 7 November 1954, Économie, Carton 1 Chemise 2.

[37] Edgar Faure, *Avoir toujours raison, c'est un grand tort* (Paris: Plon, 1982), 654. On Faure's countercyclical policy, see Hubert Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République* (Paris: Économica, 1987), 242-243.

[38] *J.O.* Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale, séance of 6 August 1954, 3923-3926.

[39] Letter of Dufau-Peres to IGENs, February 1955, CAEF B/16107.

[40] A good contemporary summary of the regional development orthodoxy is Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle."

importance of space to economics.[41] He also proposed the most influential model for turning this acknowledgement of uneven development into a recipe for transmitting growth across space: "polarized development." "Growth poles"—often major urban or industrial centers—would concentrate complementary activities, giving an underdeveloped region a competitive advantage in a specific sector. That could integrate the region into the national and international economy and spark cumulative growth, propelling "spread effects"—a trickle-down of jobs and wealth—throughout their regional hinterlands.[42] Perroux's conclusions were expanded upon by other influential theorists, such as Jacques Boudeville, Gunnar Myrdal, and Albert Hirschman. The distinctive element in all these men's work was their rupture from neoclassical economics, which had posited a trend to optimal equilibrium under market forces. In France and Western Europe more generally, the new generation of economists emphasized the costs of uneven development, its tendency to aggravate without state intervention, and the need for deliberate national policies to correct the problem.[43]

If the new discipline of regional economics emphasized the same precepts as government officials, it was because its practitioners often participated in regional planning.[44] Some advised the national government, especially by serving as experts in the Economic Council. In addition, many of the new specialists were associated with the provincial expansion committees. A few university chairs in regional economies had already been created during the interwar years.[45] After 1950, a much broader network of regional economic institutes sprang up. Joseph Lajugie, who went on to become one of the most influential figures of the discipline, created the first one at the University of

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[41] François Perroux, *L'Économie du XXe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1961), 143.

[42] Lajugie calls the growth pole idea the "processus privilégié de développement régional" in France, Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 147-166; Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community*, 4, 84, 89; Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 139-140; Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe*, 47-48.

[43] Stuart Holland noted that the European field differed from the U.S. field by its critique of neoclassical models: Stuart Holland, *The Regional Problem* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 236. For an English-language summary of the early French field, see Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 102-122. For more substantial summaries, see Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 64-103; Georges Benko, *La Science régionale* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1998), 53-87; Claude Lacour and Yannick Lung, "L'IERSO. Cinquante ans de recherche en science régionale à Bordeaux," *Revue d'Économie Régionale et Urbaine* 1 (2003).

[44] Benko, *La Science régionale*, 88-92. See for example the issue edited by François Bloch-Lainé and Jean-Marcel Jeanneney of *Revue économique* 7, no. 6 (1956).

[45] For instance Raoul Blanchard in the Alps, Philippe Veitl, "Les Régions économiques Clémentel et l'invention de la région des Alpes françaises" (doctoral thesis, Université de Grenoble, 1992), 339-361.

Bordeaux in 1950 (the Institut d'économie régionale du Sud-Ouest). Other centers followed, the most prominent ones in other "peripheral" regions: in Rennes, with Henri Krier, and in Montpellier, with Jules Milhau. After 1961, they launched a national research program, creating a French Language Regional Science Association.[46]

All three of these men worked closely with their regional expansion committees. Lajugie even served as the adjunct for economic questions to Bordeaux's young mayor, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, in addition to his university functions. In 1954, he helped create the Bordeaux area's expansion committee, which became a lynchpin in Chaban's three-decade municipal dynasty.[47] In Brittany, the regionalist organization CELIB created its own permanent think tank, in the form of an "economic commission" run by the university geographer Michel Phlipponneau. Deliberately modeled on the national planning commissions of the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP), it brought together hundreds of experts, politicians, and socioeconomic leaders around the CELIB's vast regional planning sessions.[48]

The regional economy institutes set out to classify underdevelopment and to analyze the particular needs of backwards regions for entering mainstream economic growth. This project had two political purposes. One was to legitimate modernization programs to local residents.[49] In a recent retrospective, Joseph Lajugie emphasized that Bordeaux's elites had not begun thinking of their region as being in a state of economic stagnation until the IERSO demonstrated its backwardness through a calculation of "des

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[46] Lacour and Lung, "L'IERSO;" Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 183-184.

[47] It was called the Centre d'expansion Bordeaux Sud-Ouest. Other factors in the Comité's founding were the discovery of natural gas in nearby Lacq and Chaban-Delmas' portfolio as Minister of Public Works, which promised to bring projects into the district. Infighting between modernizers and conservatives prevented a viable functioning of the Committee until a Troika of modernizers were installed in three key institutions—the prefecture, the Chamber of Commerce, and Chaban in city hall. Joseph Lajugie, "La création du comité d'expansion en 1954," in *Bordeaux et la Gironde pendant la reconstruction, 1945-1954*, ed. Hubert Bonin, Sylvie Guillaume, and Bernard Lachaise (Publications de la Maison des sciences de l'homme d'Aquitaine, 1997), 216.

[48] Yann Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne: La région et l'État (1950-2000)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), 114-115; Solène Gaudin, "Le Parcours d'un géographe: Michel Phlipponneau" (masters thesis, Université Rennes 2, 2003).

[49] On the Breton case, Pasquier writes, "La stigmatisation du 'retard breton' et la croyance dans les possibilités de développement régional constituent le cadre cognitif qui permet la mobilisation de tous les secteurs de la société régionale." Romain Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions: Une comparaison France/Espagne* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 41. Henri Krier, the Rennes economist who helped coordinate the new studies, claimed that this operated a "révolution mentale" in the region. Cited in Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 114-115.

disparités régionales de développement." Comparing the region's large agricultural population, low industrialization rate, and lack of advanced services to national norms, the Institute demonstrated that the Bordeaux area "était bien devenue...une région sous-développée, au sein d'un grand Ouest globalement attardé."[50] Such thinking was at the origins of that generalized fear of underdevelopment noted by Olivier Guichard.

The second mission of the provincial think tanks was to support regional committees' claims for national aid. On this score, the 1950s brought a mix of clear breakthroughs and severe limits: spatial Keynesian logics were adopted as official government policy, but powerful constituencies immediately mobilized to limit or combat them. This schizophrenic logic was present first and foremost among the economic policymakers at the CGP and the Finance Ministry. There was no doubting the discursive breakthrough created in these administrations during Pflimlin's year in office. "Le redressement des déséquilibres régionaux," the IGEN wrote in 1955, "apparaît ainsi comme constituant un des impératifs fondamentaux de l'expansion de notre économie."[51]

Yet many economic planners remained disinterested in the regional problem—even when it had seemingly obvious relevance for their immediate concerns, such as labor management.[52] Others feared a welfarist "worst-first" approach to redistribution. Francis Louis Closon, Director of the economic data institute INSEE, complained that under Pflimlin the Finance Ministry had gotten too wrapped up in spatial Keynesianism. Having assumed "a priori que toute implantation [de nouvelles industries] dans une zone disposant de main-d'œuvre et d'installations industrielles est favorable," Closon said, Pflimlin was focusing too much energy on aiding areas in crisis today, and not enough on designing a rational economic space for "la France de demain."[53] François Bloch-Lainé, who helped design many of the 1954-1955 policies, soon worried that they would feed provincial claims-making, serve as a protectionist lifeline for low-productivity companies

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[50] Lajugie and his crew hammered the message home in a traveling set of public conferences. Lajugie, "La création du comité d'expansion en 1954," 203-208.
[51] The location of new "reconversion" subsidies, which went mostly to the Northeast, and the expected decline in farm work or certain industrial orders, which hit the Southwest the hardest. Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux," 20 March 1955, CAEF B/16107.
[52] See Jean Fourastié's testimony in Henri Rousso, *De Monnet à Massé: Enjeux politiques et objectifs économiques dans le cadre des quatre premiers Plans (1946-1965)* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1986), 84. See also Pierre Viot, note to Montjoie, 31 July 1967, CAC 19920537/2.
[53] Closon note to Affaires économiques, 23 May 1955, CAEF B/16127.

(or *canards boiteux*), and impediment to free-market dynamics at a time when the state was trying to extricate itself from postwar *dirigisme*.[54] Above all, it was the Budget and the Treasury that reacted negatively to the new measures. As a Finance Ministry note explained, the two directions' services "se sont émus des charges que [les programmes d'action régionale] pourraient imposer au trésor public." When Pierre Pflimlin left the ministry at the end of 1955, some Finance administrators floated the idea of eliminating the PARs initiative altogether.[55]

Backtracking on either regional planning and the spatial Keynesian idea, however, was now a political impossibility. Instead, the Finance Ministry slowed down the planning procedure and took its distance from Pflimlin's initial conception of the PARs as a list of concrete government initiatives. The CGP now argued that the programs in no way engaged state funding—even inserting in the texts that "les mesures et recommandations qu'ils énoncent ne comportent en général ni échéancier de réalisation ni garantie de financement."[56] And whereas Pflimlin had initially intended for the first programs to be enacted within the year, his successors decided to hold off on their realization until all regions' PARs were completed. As it turned out, the last program was only finished in 1966, at which point the whole project had long since been shelved.[57]

Just as important for slowing down the redistribution announced in 1955 was the opposition from the representatives of strong regions. A key tenet of spatial Keynesian thinking was that uneven development had a net cost for these high-growth areas, which suffered from urban congestion, lost consumer demand due to the weak consumer markets of rural France, and ended up supporting lagging regions through higher taxes.[58]

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[54] Bloch-Lainé in particular voiced this opinion. François Bloch-Lainé, "Les moyens financiers de l'action régionale," *La Revue administrative* 10 (1957); François Bloch-Lainé, "Sept années d'incitation à l'expansion régionale: bilan et leçons," *Revue Juridique et Economique du Sud-Ouest* 4 (1962). On the role of *aménagement du territoire* in reversing the government's abandonment of *dirigisme*, see Laure Quennouelle-Corre, *La Direction du Trésor, 1947-1967: L'État-banquier et la croissance* (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 2000), 189-190.
[55] Monier, note aux Inspecteurs généraux de l'Économie nationale, 29 June 1956, CAEF B/45774.
[56] Roger Monier, *Région et économie régionale* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1965), 162-164.
[57] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 190-192; Monier, *Région et économie régionale*, 161-170.
[58] See also Philippe Lamour, *60 millions de français* (Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1967), 35.

Paul Reynaud—a representative of the industrialized Nord department and the president of the National Assembly's Finance Commission—expressed this logic well:

> En effet, c'est un fait qui est peu connu, mesdames, messieurs, que le tiers des départements français paye les deux tiers des impôts en France. Ces départements—le tiers des départements français—sont engagés dans la course sur le plan international. Les autres, je ne dirai pas qu'ils sont sur les gradins, car la vie leur est dure aussi, mais ils ne sont pas dans la course.

To make his point, Reynaud revealed a stunning gap between his department of Nord, which had paid 106 billion francs in tax revenues in 1954, and a southwestern department ("que vous voudrez bien me dispenser de désigner autrement") that only paid 3 billion. Southern regions' contribution to the Hexagon's international trade balance was equally dismal. Getting underdeveloped France to pull its share in national competitivesness was a good reason for a northeastern politician like Reynaud to support a productivist program of regional modernization.[59]

Unfortunately for the government, not all strong-region politicians took such a sanguine view of regional redistribution. During the parliamentary debates on Pflimlin's 1955 legislation, another representative of Nord, Paul Gosset, challenged the government's new regional plans. Redistribution, Gosset feared, would drag down France's most competitive territories—"des régions actives...qui...apportent l'essentiel de la richesse nationale sur tous les plans"—in a welfarist attempt to prop up "des régions [...] éteintes."[60] As other representatives from the northeast questioned the government's new equalizing logic and politicians from poor regions clamored for its immediate implementation, Pflimlin intervened to cool down the debate. The Finance minister warned against letting the question of distribution "déclencher une querelle entre le Nord et le Midi." He promised that the government would not "diviser la France en deux zones," strong and weak, with two standards of state intervention. Regional policy would benefit everyone equally, and the goal of redistribution would be weighed against the

[59] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 28 March 1955, 1991.
[60] *Journal officiel de la République française: Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, (Paris: Imprimerie des Journaux Officiels), seance of 25 May 1955, 3004, 3011.

imperatives of maximizing national growth and ensuring France's competitiveness.[61] This was a durable message in the government's new regional planning.[62]

The need to balance regional interests helped stall the application of many of the 1955 measures and gutted others of their redistributive potential. The regional investment banks (SDRs) had originally been intended for poor regions only, but under political pressure the government generalized them to all regions except Paris. At that point, economically stronger areas benefited most from the SDRs, since they had more local wealth to mobilize, boasted more solvent manufacturers for their investments, and thus were more attractive to the Parisian banks that provided much of the SDRs' capital.[63] Meanwhile, territorial antagonisms did as much as Finance Ministry resistance to slow down regional planning. In keeping with the idea that the PARs were pragmatic documents intended to rapidly deliver programs to underdeveloped areas, Pflimlin selected Brittany to be the first on the list for obtaining a regional plan. But the Bretons' well-organized coalition got so many of its demands included in the government's program that it provoked a backlash, which stalled the planning process altogether. A number of central experts feared that if all of the regions at the top of the queue in the PAR procedure obtained as generous a package as the Bretons, either regions that came later would be disadvantaged or the government would have to inflate spending considerably to cover all the projects. Representatives of the CGP and the CES therefore recommended holding off on concrete actions until all twenty-two regional programs could be completed and harmonized in a single national plan.[64]

In sum, the 1955 debates immediately revealed the tensions created by a program of regional redistribution: a mix of concerns for limiting demands on government spending, for protecting national growth from welfarist spending in France's least productive territories, and for balancing the interests of weak and strong regions. These three logics would severely limit equalizing projects in the following years. On the other

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[61] Indeed, Pflimlin intervened as the two members of parliament were debating about which side of the "Loire-Strasbourg line" ("ligne de la Loire à Strasbourg") was tagged to get the most credits in the Plan. Ibid., seance of 25 May 1955, 3011-2.
[62] Pierre Massé, "Aspects régionaux de la préparation du IVème Plan" (15 November 1960) CAC 19930278/50.
[63] Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 61-62.
[64] See the stances of Philip, Dary, and Vergeot in the Commission des économies régionales, minutes of 28 March 1956, CES archives, CHAN CE/503.

hand, the Pflimlin ministry durably enshrined the spatial Keynesian principle that correcting uneven development was indispensable for national expansion. As the Breton regionalist Joseph Martray later put it, whatever the limits of the 1955 legislation, it ensured that "la planification régionale ne pouvait plus être présentée comme hérétique: elle était désormais intégrée au dogme."[65]

3. The Two Frances

The sense of a geographic dichotomy between backwardness and modernity was given form in the notion of the "two Frances." According to this familiar trope, the nation can be split in two along a line running from the northwest to the southeast: Saint-Malo to Geneva in its earliest version, and between the Seine and Rhone deltas in postwar France. The northeastern half of the country is more urban, industrial, dynamic, and wealthy; the southwestern half is more backwards, rural, and impoverished.[66]

The concept is an old one, invented during the early nineteenth century. It is worth briefly recounting this "discovery" of the two Frances. It parallels the postwar revival of the trope and illustrates the importance of the epistemology of statistics in shaping geographic imaginaries.[67] Until the 1820s, French statistics were processed at two main scales. At the national level, data was aggregated with little consideration for territorial differences. Meanwhile, various local units—including the new department, decreed in 1789—offered a space for undertaking thick description of realities on the ground. The local idiosyncrasies of this "descriptive statistics" made it impossible to establish statistical overviews of the national space. That changed thanks to the centralizing and homogenizing ambitions of Napoleon I. Officials in Paris forced the

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[65]Ibid., 89.

[66] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 494.

[67] On the conceptual invention of the "two Frances" and other macrogeographic disparities in France, see Bernard Lepetit, "Sur les dénivellations de l'espace économique en France, dans les années 1830," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 41 (1986); Marcel Roncayolo, "L'aménagement du territoire (18ème-20ème siècles)," in *Histoire de la France, tome 1: L'espace français*, ed. André Burguière and Jacques Revel (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 540-548; Roger Chartier, "La ligne Saint-Malo-Genève," in *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986); Florence Deprest, "Nord et Sud en France dans les Géographies Universelles (1829-1990): une différenciation à l'épreuve des mutations de la géographie," *Revue du Nord* 87 (2005). My analysis also draws on Silvana Patriarcha's wonderful history of retraces the role of statistics in the creation of regions, the "two Italies," and a state program for the "civilization" of the Mezzogiorno in Italy. Silvana Patriarca, *Numbers and Nationhood: Writing Statistics in Nineteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

departments to begin collecting a standard set of statistics, which allowed them to observe new spatial contrasts and gradients in categories like wealth and moral customs across the national territory.

By experimenting with the new statistics, experts realized that France could be usefully divided into two geographic blocs, separated by irreducible contrasts. This fact was first realized by Charles Dupin, in an 1826 study of education rates. As Bernard Lepetit tells the story, Dupin

> souligne l'existence d'une "ligne tranchée et noirâtre qui sépare le Nord et le Midi de la France" de part et d'autre de laquelle des taux de scolarisation dissemblables opposent la "France éclairée" et la "France obscure." La ligne Saint-Malo/Genève est inventée.

Once Dupin had demonstrated the existence of two Frances—one more civilized than the other—the use of the new geographic framework snowballed.

> Dès l'année suivante, Dupin vérifie la coïncidence entre les niveaux de développement économique et les écarts de l'instruction. Des statistiques départementales de production agricole, de densité de population, d'infrastructures de transport, et du produit des impôts lui permettent d'établir la supériorité économique des 32 départements situés au nord d'une ligne qui court cette fois de Cherbourg à Genève.[68]

Over the next decade, other commentators measured new variables against the same spatial dichotomy. In doing so, they reinforced the recently constructed discourse, giving the two Frances idea the appearance of an objective fact. In addition, many of their studies served a political project: to make the southwest more like the northeast. As would again be the case in the 1950s, these development prescriptions often focused on shifting France's excess agricultural population to industrial work.[69] In 1838 a Saint-Simonian engineer, Michel Chevalier, even produced what geographer Marcel Roncayolo calls a "[v]éritable plan d'aménagement du territoire" that contained stunning similarities to the projects of the 1950s and 1960s.[70]

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[68] Bernard Lepetit, "Deux siècles de croissance régionale en France: regard sur l'historiographie," in *La Croissance régionale dans l'Europe méditerranéenne, XVIII*ème*-XX*ème *siècles*, ed. Louis Bergeron (Paris: Éditions de l'EHESS, 1992), 24.

[69] As historian Roger Chartier paraphrases these projects, "Grâce au transfert des agriculteurs trop nombreux vers l'industrie et à la généralisation de l'instruction populaire, la ligne Saint-Malo-Genève s'effacer[ait]." Chartier, "La ligne Saint-Malo-Genève," 745.

[70] Roncayolo, "L'Aménagement du territoire," 530-533, 537.

Then the two Frances idea fell out of favor. Bernard Lepetit writes that the Saint-Malo/Geneva line was forgotten after 1850 and "exhumée un siècle plus tard."[71] That is perhaps an exaggeration, but the idea was hardly referenced in planning debates before 1954. This is a puzzling fact, given the existence of strong core-periphery inequalities in France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The answer seems to lie in the same place as in the 1820s: at the nexus of epistemology, political projects, and geographic discourse. In terms of epistemology, national aggregates and thick local description regained their monopoly in the production of statistics and other geographic knowledge, squeezing out experimentation with intermediate spaces and territorial gradients.[72] This absence of spatial statistics was made possible by the lack of a prominent political project for equalizing the French territory. A regional economies movement did emerge after World War I, but it remained weak. New spatial data only began to emerge after 1945, when the MRU and provincial boosters twisted the arms of France's new statistics institute, the INSEE, and the national planning agency CGP to provide data for their project of regional equalization. It was only in the 1960s that the quantitative modeling of national inequalities and spatial structures hit its full stride, to

[71] The planners of the 1950s certainly had no memory of Dupin, Chevalier, or any other substantial reflection on a redistributionist national territorial plan before the late 1930s. Lepetit, "Sur les dénivellations," 1244. Deprest notes that Vidal de la Blache had a sense of north and south as being opposed in terms of nature; interwar geographers seem to have entirely abandoned the trop, to judge by the *Géographie universelle* of 1940-1944. Deprest, "Nord et Sud en France dans les Géographies Universelles," 433-435.

[72] The focus on national aggregates was the work of the state statistics service that survived from 1840 to 1946, the *Statistique générale de la France*. (Daniel Nordman and Jacques Revel, "La formation de l'espace français," in *Histoire de la France, tome 1: L'espace français*, ed. André Burguière and Jacques Revel (Paris: Seuil, 1989), 95-96.) Meanwhile, the French school of geography focused on regional monographs that thickly described local particularities. Three exceptions proved this rule. First, the famous geographer Vidal de La Blache had an interest in comparative urban and regional analysis turned to a practical project of territorial transformation; this approach remained in the minority in the interwar, but proved influential in the postwar. Second, the economic regions Vidal helped design in 1917 remained weak and declined by the late 1920s. Finally, the DGEN studies under Vichy firmly established the ideal of furnishing spatial data for a state-led transformation of the national territory, but they largely recognized their ignorance and called for much more study. For a summary, see Marie-Claire Robic, ed., *Couvrir le monde: Un grand XXe siècle de géographie française* (Paris: ADPF, 2006), 126-141, and the longer account in part II. For a study of geographers in the new development administrations, see Gilles Massardier, *Expertise et aménagement du territoire: L'état savant* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996). On the tension between local, monographic and broader, systematizing geographic analyses, see also the review article and accompanying texts, Marie-Vic Ozouf-Marignier and Annie Sevin, "Formes de savoirs géographiques: des monographies aux lectures de la régionalisation," *Revue d'Histoire des Sciences Humaines* 2 (2003).

meet the demand of a booming regional policy apparatus.[73] Finally, other geographic discourses held center stage. In the 1940s, the inventors of *aménagement du territoire* thought mainly in terms of two dichotomies: between city and countryside, and between Paris and the provinces. The most salient difference between the southwest and the northeast—a surplus agricultural population and low industrial job rates—only became a preeminent variable in their equalizing project with the 1955 decrees. By that time, a much more comprehensive vision of the two Frances dichotomy had already been established.[74]

Like in the 1820s, the rediscovery of the two Frances idea was something of a Copernican revolution. Before 1954, it was hardly referenced. But once the trope was reintroduced into public discourse, its use snowballed. Observers lined up all kinds of statistics that showed the salience of this spatial dichotomy. The epicenter of that paradigm shift was in the reports of the Inspection General of the National Economy. The two Frances idea reappeared in 1954, as Dufau-Peres traced unemployment during the recession that followed the Korean War. Once the geography of industrial unemployment had drawn the IGEN's attention to disparities between "de larges portions du territoire," he began multiplying the variables that differentiated the northeast and the southwest. By early 1954, he had a two Frances framework worthy of Charles Dupin's 1826 text: there was a general imbalance between "les deux parties de la France qui, schématiquement, pourraient être délimitées par une ligne allant de Rouen à Montpellier."[75]

The episode demonstrates that, as much as new data, it was a new way of thinking about geography that sparked the discourse of a France divided in two. Before 1954, the IGEN already had a synoptic view of the national territory. Indeed, its very role was to

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[73] Men like Lajugie and Milhau saw the establishment of a "regional accounting" to match the "national accounting" as one of their primary goals. On regional accounting in France, see Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 783-789.

[74] A good example of the effect of this conceptual blinder is Pierre George's wartime study of the nation's industrial "density" and available labor, which we saw in the previous chapter. These two variables revealed a clear opposition between the industrial east and the rural west; they also prefigured the 1955 legislation's focus on transferring industrial jobs to rural labor. However, George never invoked the two Frances trope, and his very exercise was criticized by Gravier and the MRU. (See chapter 3) It was only after 1954 that surplus rural labor would be officially recognized as an "indice du sous-développement."

[75] Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des Inspecteurs Généraux et Inspecteurs de l'Économie Nationale sur la situation économique à fin janvier 1954," 23 February 1954, Pierre Mendès France personal archives, IPMF, Économie, Carton 4.

collect data on regional and national trends, which the Inspector General Dufau-Peres then synthesized in periodic reports for the government. Nonetheless, it had not offered a reading of supra-regional disparities until 1954.[76] Moreover, even then the breakthrough was highly contingent. The southwest was not a self-evident unit. After all, in the early 1950s unemployment hit towns across France, with some of the most troublesome areas in the northeast. Dufau-Peres only considered southwestern unemployment to be particularly dangerous because, unlike in the north, laid-off workers would have to accept a long-distance migration in order to find new jobs.[77] Nonetheless, once the two Frances framework was in place, observers used all kinds of data to confirm it. In October 1954, *France-Observateur* summarized a slew of "statistiques fort variées" that revealed a "coupure du pays en deux parts, l'une en progrès, l'autre en sommeil et même en crise...selon une ligne Le Havre-Besançon." Demographic growth and wealth; the number of industrial construction permits issued and the percentage of total production capacity in use; the kinds of crops produced, the value of agricultural land, and even a map of fertilizer sales in the latest issue of the *Bulletin des Engrais*—all separated the two Frances.[78] By 1965, a public opinion poll showed that the percentage of residents who thought they lived in a backwards region neatly fit the two Frances trope rediscovered a decade earlier.[79]

The political fortune of the two Frances idea was given a major boost by the Poujadist movement. Pierre Poujade was a small-town book store owner from the southwestern department of Lot. In 1953, he began to organize small businesses to block tax collection, protesting against a rapid succession of tax hikes. Over the next few years, "Poujadism" developed into a full-fledged tax revolt and a national political movement. Mainstream leaders saw its insubordination and anti-parliamentarian rhetoric as a

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[76] See for example Dufau-Peres, "Synthèse des rapports des IGEN," February-May 1953, Jean Saint-Geours personal archives, BHMF; and the reports in CAEF B/16210.
[77] Comité de l'emploi, minutes of 23 November 1953, CAEF B/16210.
[78] Ries, "Comment aménager l'espace économique français?" *France Observateur*, 10/21/1954. *Le Monde* confirms that the IGEN reports were the initial indicator of the two Frances: "La disparité entre les régions économiques de la France s'accentue," *Le Monde*, 8/29-30/1954. The line of the two Frances varied. Thanks to the research of the economist Jean-Marcel Jeanneney, the Social and Economic Council argued that if one put the line running "du Mont-Saint-Michel à Saint Véran, qui est la plus haute commune de France dans le Queyras," average annual revenue was almost perfectly two times greater in the northeast third of the country than in the southwestern two-thirds. Cited in Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique des économies régionales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 16.
[79] Clout, *The Geography of Postwar France*, 27-28.

veritable insurrection against Republican institutions.[80] Their sense of national crisis only grew as Poujade's Union de Défense des Commerçants et des Artisans (UDCA) outpaced the Christian-Democratic MRP in the 1956 elections.[81]

For many observers, Poujadism symbolized the existence of a backwards France opposed to economic integration and to the administration's modernizing economic policy. Poujade himself proclaimed that traditional France was at war with the forces of change that threatened it from the outside.[82] In the words of historian Richard Kuisel, Poujade's followers "saw the French being drugged by 'progressive' propaganda about efficiency while the planners surreptitiously sought to eliminate small farms and shops...they saw themselves defending French traditions, even Western civilization, against the 'system'" of state technocrats and international capital.[83] Many political leaders and analysts echoed Poujade's Manichean vision, but inversed its implications. For them, the UDCA served as a metonym—and, through its election results, as an empirical indicator—of a poor, archaic France that felt threatened by the traumas of modernization.[84]

One of the things the movement revealed was that this backwards France had definite spatial coordinates. The geographic implantation of the UDCA revealed the split

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[80] Romain Souillac calls the alarmist, defensive attitude that emerged among state administrators a "sous-culture républicaine de combat." Romain Souillac, *Le Mouvement Poujade: De la défense professionnelle au populisme nationaliste, 1953-1962* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2007), 169, and more generally 19, 22, 150-169.

[81] Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 335.

[82] His followers—a mix of small retailers, artisans, and to a lesser extent small farmers—saw territorially rooted "natural" communities as more legitimate than democratic state institutions for defining the will of the nation. As Souillac writes, "on met en avant des droits historiques hérités d'un passé ancestral, l'attachement charnel au territoire, on glorifie 'l'atavisme.'" This was the strand of thinking represented by Maurras and the Action française, which emphasized the distinction between the "pays réel" of natural communities and the "pays légal" of state institutions. Souillac, *Le Mouvement Poujade*, 15, 19.

[83] Richard Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France: Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 270-271. Poujade was not entirely off the mark in his assessment of the situation. Many government modernizers (and their U.S. Marshall Plan advisers) welcomed the rapid decline in the number of small shopkeepers like Poujade. The tax hikes were therefore part of the state-led modernization program known as "reconversion"—a way of shifting capital from what they saw as a parasitical sector to dynamic sectors, via new public funds for economic modernization. Herrick Chapman, "Réformateurs et contestataires de l'impôt après la seconde guerre mondiale," in *L'impôt en France aux XIXe et XXe siècle*, ed. Maurice Lévy-Leboyer, Michel Lescure, and Alain Plessis (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 2006), 321. On the social makeup of UDCA supporters, see Souillac, *Le Mouvement Poujade*, 24-26.

[84] In the words of historian Jean-Pierre Rioux, "L'analyse du poujadisme...mieux connu que d'autres actions plus souterraines, permet, à elle seule, de cerner l'essentiel de cette résistance [au changement]." Jean-Pierre Rioux, *La France de la Quatrième République: Tome 2: L'expansion et l'impuissance, 1952-1958* (Paris: Seuil, 1983), 78.

between city and countryside; few of its adherents lived in cities. Just as importantly, the party's electoral geography evoked the two Frances. Poujade's movement spread out of the south and gained its strongest following in the southwestern half of the country.[85] Comparing maps of election results, productivity, and industrial rates, the political scientist François Goguel concluded, "le poujadisme apparaît comme un phénomène politique caractéristique, sinon au sens propre d'un sous-développement économique, au moins d'une stagnation économique, souvent accompagnée de recul démographique." Even worse, a detailed local survey suggested that the UDCA movement was not just a reflection of poverty, but also of a protest against modernization measures by threatened interests—such as farmers targeted for land regrouping and low-wage manufacturers facing competition from decentralized factories.

This extremist defense of traditional economies turned the politics of *aménagement du territoire* on their head. As Goguel explained, the 1951 election results had reassured centrists in their celebration of traditional small-town France and their denunciation of the big city, with its dangerous working class. Since the Gaullist and especially the Communist votes were concentrated in the nation's industrial centers, "il leur semblait en effet que l'existence d'une économie moderne, productive, le plus souvent fortement industrialisée, s'accompagnait politiquement d'une fâcheuse propension à l'extrémisme, alors qu'au contraire les régions de structure traditionnelle donnaient la majorité à des partis centristes, modérés et raisonnables." The 1956 elections reversed these assumptions. The moderates were now threatened by the right-wing extremism of backwards provinces. *Aménagement du territoire*'s political mission—to "rendre à l'esprit public, ou plus exactement à ses grandes tendances, plus d'homogénéité"—had shifted from the problem of breaking urban workers out of their proletarian isolation to the problem of integrating a traditional France made dangerous by "la survivance de structures économiques anciennes."[86]

Neither the geographic nor the political aspect of the Poujadist movement was lost on the government. Pierre Pflimlin recalled in his memoirs:

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[85] Souillac put the division of Poujadism's success south "d'une ligne approximative Vendée – Eure-et-Loir – Savoie." Souillac, *Le Mouvement Poujade*, 41, see also 13-14, 38-43. See also Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République*, 335-336.

[86] François Goguel, "Quelques aspects politiques de l'aménagement du territoire," *Revue française de science politique* 6 (1956): 271-272, 275-276.

> Une fois installé au ministère des Finances, on m'a soumis des cartes et j'ai constaté qu'il y avait, dans le sud-ouest de la France, une quinzaine de départements dans lesquels on ne pouvait opérer aucun contrôle fiscal...[Le mouvement] avançait vers le nord de la France très rapidement et je voyais le moment où il allait s'emparer de la région parisienne. Finalement, le gouvernement a été renversé.[87]

Reflecting his sense of a backwards south contaminating the rest of the Republic, Pflimlin proposed treating the crisis as a regional problem. The government responded with two approaches: appeasement in the short term, mixed with a longer-term counter-attack through regional development. Appeasement came in the form of a government retreat on the tax reform and the centralization of tax collection. As Pflimlin told the National Assembly:

> Comment ne pas se rendre compte...que si la France est profondément une, le paysage moral français est aussi divers que son paysage naturel, qu'il est des diversités de tempérament et que les situations économiques, qui subissent de façon si diverse...l'évolution du monde moderne, servent de soubassement à des tempéraments régionaux, à des particularismes provinciaux, dont doit tenir compte la politique fiscale comme toute autre forme d'action d'État?[88]

A national law and the national administration would have to cede before the reality of regional particularities.[89]

On the other hand, Pflimlin hoped his vigorous regional policy would eliminate the socioeconomic bases of Poujade's demagogic politics. The Finance Minister was one of many observers who saw underdevelopment as the fundamental source of the social anger relayed by the movement. The government's tax reform was just a surface issue, he said. The fact that millions of Frenchmen were stuck in traditional economies "apparaît comme la cause profonde des fièvres qui agitent certaines régions demeurées en retard. Si [cet état de fait] s'accentuait davantage, il pourrait constituer un péril pour

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[87] Pierre Pflimlin and Daniel Riot, *Entretiens avec Pierre Pflimlin: Itinéraires d'un Européen* (Strasbourg: Nuée bleue, 1989), 161-163.

[88] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 18 March 1955, 1684. This discourse echoed the government's stance on another realm that connected the state with ordinary Frenchmen: the minimum wage and social allocations. See chapter 3.

[89] At the heart of the Poujadiste revolt had been the administration's attempt to standardize tax collection across the nation. Paris had realized that tax control differed regionally, with provincial tax collectors striking deals with their local subjects; the Finance Ministry hoped to eradicate such regional irregularities by recentralizing oversight.

l'unité de la Nation."[90] This fear of a split between underdeveloped and advanced regions motivated Pflimlin's ambitious program of regional modernization. As he told the National Assembly:

> Il ne faut pas que demain, selon une ligne de partage, d'ailleurs difficile à tracer, il y ait deux France, celle qui pourrait bénéficier pleinement du progrès technique, qui entrerait de plain-pied dans la vie moderne au même niveau que les nations les plus évoluées et puis la France de ces régions délaissées, sous-développées, sous-évoluées dont les populations seraient sans chances et sans espoir.[91]

Or as the Assembly's Finance Commission put it, "le Gouvernement nous dit: Puisque la situation est grave, surtout dans la partie sous-développée du pays, développons cette partie."[92] Parliament ratified this logic. *Aménagement du territoire* would be the tool for integrating the French people around a framework of modernization, expansion, and trade liberalization. In that sense, the Poujadist uprising achieved ambivalent results. By getting the tax reform modified, the shopkeeper demonstrated that populist politics still had the capacity to influence a postwar regime increasingly dominated by modernizing elites.[93] But in doing so, Poujade gave modernizers a justification for more aggressive attempts to eradicate the political economy that made such defensive politics possible.

4. Development: a Foreign Import

Over the next few years, the initial barrage of data used to prove the split between the two Frances was reinforced by a much more systematic explanation of regional divergence: the development concept. Like *aménagement du territoire* and the "two Frances," development was a concept that led the political debate away from a narrow focus on industrial employment to a much broader package of problems that needed to be treated together. Unlike *aménagement du territoire*, however, the postwar development idea was not a home-grown product. The discourse first emerged in Southern Europe,

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[90] The "immobilisme" of France's most archaic social groups and regions, Pflimlin said, had shifted from passivity to active revolt—and "non plus seulement la protestation, mais la menace et parfois la rébellion." Pflimlin "Conférence faite à la Société d'économie politique de Lyon le 3 octobre 1955," CAEF 5A/2. See also *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 29-30 March 1955, 2060, 2065.

[91] *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 18 March 1955, 1683.

[92] Paul Reynaud, President of the Commission des finances, in *J.O. Débats parlementaires: Assemblée Nationale*, séance of 29-30 March 1955, 1991. Maurice Faure, representing Poujade's home department, likewise took to the podium on behalf of a bold regional policy to prevent from "s'aggraver...de jour en jour ce décalage entre les deux grandes catégories de régions françaises." Ibid., 2047-2048.

[93] In the words of Chapman, a "conflit entre l'approche technocratique de régénération de la Nation et le réflexe défensif de la politique populaire." Chapman, "Réformateurs et contestataires de l'impôt," 321.

Western Europe's colonies, and other areas of the recently designated "Third World."[94] It was only then that the concept was imported into the debates of metropolitan France. As Joseph Lajugie wrote in 1956,

> Le développement économique régional est aujourd'hui l'un des thèmes majeurs de la politique économique en France...Et pourtant, ce n'est pas à l'échelle des régions, mais bien à celle des pays, voire des continents, que le problème du sous-développement s'est d'abord imposé à l'attention des pouvoirs publics.[95]

Lajugie was in a position to know. He had undertaken an evaluation of "La politique d'investissements pour le développement économique et social en Afrique Occidentale Française" in 1954, the same year he helped create Bordeaux's new regional expansion committee.[96]

As French people rethought the relationship between the nation and its regions in the 1950s and 1960s, they therefore complemented an earlier focus on the U.S. and other Western European countries with growing references to an imperial and international order that was undergoing rapid change.[97] These overseas comparisons highlighted the issue of territorial inequalities within France. They also nourished the sentiment that if poor provinces did not urgently break with the past and adopt new modernization programs, they might be left behind in a rapidly developing world.

A good example of the international circulation of the development concept was the U.N. "Economic Survey of Europe in 1954." The Survey included a special report on France which took Paris to task for failing to aggressively combat regional inequalities. It therefore made a splash on the French political scene, coinciding with the parliamentary debates over the shape of the regional development decrees.[98] The Survey argued that it was necessary to distinguish the problem of simply depressed areas—namely, industrial basins suffering from temporary unemployment—from that of

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[94] Cooper and Packard, "Introduction," 6-18.
[95] Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 355. See also Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 65.
[96] Joseph Lajugie, "La Politique d'investissements pour le développement économique et social en Afrique Occidentale Française," *Annales de la Faculté de droit de l'Université de Bordeaux. Série juridique* 1 (1952-sept. 1955, 1954).
[97] On this point, see Herman Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home: France in the Global Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), xiii, 6, 179; Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 7.
[98] Among others, see *Le Monde*, 20 March 1955, in press dossier, Sciences Po, France 506; CAEF, Secrétaire d'État aux Affaires économiques, fragments d'archives du cabinet, 1955-1956, 98.

underdeveloped regions. The latter were defined by a common package of social and economic features similar to the ones identified by the IGEN Dufau-Peres.[99] In addition, Europe's underdeveloped regions were all peripheral, in both a geographic and a structural economic sense. A continental map of average revenues showed that the poorest nations and, within them, the poorest regions were situated the farthest from Europe's industrial core. Meanwhile, unequal trade patterns were a mark and a cause of their persistent poverty.[100]

The U.N. Survey was quite explicit about the fact that the development idea was initially a product of international institutions, its hypotheses tested out on poor countries before being applied to Europe's internal periphery.[101] Indeed, the U.N.'s use of the center-periphery idea was itself based on a deliberate parallel between international and inter-regional inequalities. "Since differences in the degree of dependence upon agriculture are the main structural differences between poorer and richer countries," the Survey explained, "it is not surprising that the pattern of commodity trade as between regions likewise corresponds to that between countries: the poorer regions do as a rule export food, forest products and raw materials derived from agriculture to the richer regions and import manufactures and services."[102] The context of the report's production gives strong clues about how this importation of the development idea occurred. The Economic Commission for Europe, which produced the report, was one of several U.N. regional commissions set up to do international development work (for Asia in 1947, Latin America in 1948, and Africa in 1958). Its president, the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal, worked with those commissions and became broadly implicated in the

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[99] An abnormally high agricultural population was the most distinctive criterion. Others included the absence of dynamic industrial branches, low productivity in all sectors, low revenues, and a set of "institutional factors" that cumulatively aggravated the gap between rich and poor regions. These included such problems as inequalities in "social capital," tax rates, access to credit, and freight shipping and energy rates.

[100] The report can be found as chapter 21, "Problems of Regional Development and Industrial Location in Europe," in John Friedmann and William Alonso, eds., *Regional Planning and Development: A Reader* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1964), 408, 418, 428.. See also Lajugie, Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle," 356-357.

[101] "The growing interest in the problems of economic development which is an outstanding feature of post-war economic thinking," it stated in the opening, "has, quite naturally, been focused mainly on the wide differences existing between countries....increasing attention has, however, been paid in recent years to the related problems of regional disparities in levels of economic development within one and the same country." Friedmann and Alonso, eds., *Regional Planning and Development*, 405.

[102] The report even raised the question of whether regional policies in Western Europe might replicate the import-substitution strategies of the Third World. Ibid., 408, 418, 428.

nascent development economics of Southern Europe and the Third World.[103] The "Economic Survey of Europe in 1953" argued that Southeastern Europe was the continent's own internal periphery.[104] The 1954 Survey simply expanded that logic to the rest of Europe. Underdevelopment was not the exclusive domain of the poorest countries. It could be found within each and every nation.

Myrdal went on to draw analogies and swap lessons between international and interregional development in his classic *Rich Lands and Poor Lands*, as did Albert Hirschman in *The Strategy of Economic Development*. Many of the experts who founded France's regional development corpus also had careers that spanned Western Europe and the Third World. This included such a "Who's Who" list as François Perroux, Louis Joseph Lebret, Joseph Lajugie, Maurice Byé, Raymond Barre, Jacques Boudeville, Philippe Lamour, and Marc Penouil.[105]

These men's international travels reinforced a sense that France's regional problems were in fact part of a universal development process, with common challenges and solutions the world over. The case of Joseph Lebret illustrates the kind of conceptual shifts the development idea introduced into the 1940s framework of *aménagement du territoire*. Lebret was a Dominican priest and social reformer; he founded the influential think tank and review *Économie et Humanisme*. Between the early 1940s and the mid-1950s, he shifted from the promotion of an "intransigent" social Catholicism—defending a corporatist society of local communities against industrial modernity—to a structuralist development economics that focused on expanding production and achieving holistic social change. Lebret's thinking evolved through his international travel. During the 1950s, he mixed work on *aménagement du territoire* in France with development projects

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[103] Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers, *Pioneers in Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 149-154.

[104] "Review of: Economic Survey of Europe in 1954," *Economica* 22 (1955).

[105] On French development economics, see Philippe Hugon, "Les trois temps de la pensée francophone en économie du développement," in *État des savoirs sur le développement: Trois décennies de sciences sociales en langue française* ed. Catherine Choquet (Paris: Karthala, 1993). Weaver notes the overseas travels of regional development specialists, Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community*, 76. John Friedmann, who himself had an international career, noted the connection between the emergence of policies for the "economic development of subnational areas" in Western countries and the emergence of "economic development as an explicit goal" in "transitional societies," in Friedmann and Alonso, eds., *Regional Planning and Development*, 1-7. David Harvey mentions in passing the importance of former colonial geographers in implementing British regional planning: David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

in Latin America and France's former colonies. His trip to Brazil in the early 1950s was a key step in his intellectual trajectory. There, Lebret confronted stark regional polarization and the new development economics. The culmination of his intellectual transition came with his 1958 founding of the IRFED (Institut international de recherche et de formation en vue du développement harmonisé).[106]

Lebret's importation of the development concept into French debates can be seen in a September 1952 conference, during which *Économie et Humanisme* gathered French government officials and international guests. The Dominican priest declared that there was a fundamental convergence between *aménagement du territoire* and development ("un concept dynamique qui provient de la comparaison entre pays"). He offered a definition of development that mixed several different strands of thinking. What Lebret borrowed from international thinkers like Colin Clark was a conception of economic growth as a measure of progress, in which societies passed through universal phases of development that could be measured with the aid of comparative indicators. At the same time, the Dominican priest retained a core principle of his earlier Catholic reformism: that modernizing schemas needed to be tempered by thick local study and a broader set of humanist goals, such as easing the tensions produced by the development process in terms of social inequalities and cultural change. Finally, he retained *aménagement du territoire*'s emphasis on comprehensive territorial planning as the privileged means of achieving this total social transformation.[107]

Alongside Lebret at the 1952 conference, the Italian delegation likewise spoke the new developmentalist language. It discussed the "démarrage...d'une véritable phase d'accumulation" in the Mezzogiorno through the transfer of its excess labor to high-productivity sectors. By contrast, the other French speakers remained tied to the *aménagement du territoire* framework of the 1940s. The MRU's Eugène Claudius-Petit

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[106] Denis Pelletier, *"Économie et humanisme": De l'utopie communautaire au combat pour le tiers-monde (1941-1966)* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1996), 8-12, 289-328, 332-340, 356, 425-432.
[107] *Économie et Humanisme* 79 (May-June 1953), 14-15, 39, 60, 75.
On these aspects of Lebret's thinking, see also Ibid., 335, 360-363; Mamadou Diouf, "Senegalese Development: From Mass Mobilization to Technocratic Elitism," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 296-301. Diouf notes that Lebret's method became "hegemonic" in Senegalese development policy in the period following autonomy and independence. Lebret was the principle outside adviser to the new state, alongside Raymond Barre (295).

was still denouncing "la ville tentaculaire" and theorizing how to return its unhappy residents to nature. His sub-director, Maurice Rouge, presented a sort of national urbanism he was trying to brand as a new discipline, *géonomie*.[108] Lebret's development idea had a happier fate than *géonomie*. It would be widely cited in French regional economics.[109]

Other French economists shared Lebret's goal of establishing comparative development criteria. The economist Maurice Byé told France's Economic Council in October 1954 that the government's new system of regional development aid needed to expand its initial focus on unemployment to include "la mesure complète des inégalités"—revenue, productivity, and consumption of things like cars, electricity and education—"un peu comme...les évaluations sur les pays sous-développés." (Byé, also an international development specialist, had recently given a seminar on the "inégalités de bien-être" among nations.[110]) This goal of comparing regions based on a set of standardized criteria motivated regional economists' top scientific priority: creating a system of "regional accounting" to complement the national accounting created just after the war. As Jules Milhau explained, once the regional accounting system got up and running, "nous pourrons dire si une région est sous-développée par rapport à une autre, avec une grande chance de précision."[111]

With their conception of "lagging" and "normal" regions separated by fundamental economic differences, these efforts reinforced the "two Frances" dichotomy invented over a century earlier.[112] Drawing on EEC attempts to classify Europe's major regions according to development criteria, government planners announced a France split in three parts: "a more developed part in the East, and a less developed part in the West," with the Paris region as an idiosyncratic third entity, an overdeveloped core. This expert

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[108] *Économie et Humanisme* 79 (May-June 1953), 14-15, 39, 60, 75. The Italian was Alessandro Molinari, Director General of the Mezzogiorno development association, the SVIMEZ (Associazione per lo Sviluppo dell'Industria nel Mezzogiorno).
[109] See for example Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 83.
[110] CES, Commission des économies régionales, minutes of October 1954, CHAN IVRY 4; Maurice Byé, "Investissements internationaux et économies sous-développées," *Centre européen universitaire, Nancy, Département de sciences économiques* 6 (1952).
[111] Milhau in the minutes of the Commission des économies régionales of the Economic Council, 11/22/1955, CHAN CE 503.
[112] On the following, see: Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 142-145, 147-150; Pierre Viot, "L'Aménagement du territoire en France," (1965), 32-36.

classification largely reflected the vision of the two Frances of the 1820s, only modifying its contours to fit the boundaries of France's new administrative regions. The barrage of data that confirmed "le retard de développement des régions de l'Ouest" was now exhaustive: population per square kilometer and demographic growth rates; industrial structure, percentage of farm population, and farm sizes; big cities and the "hiérarchisation" of the "urban armature;" employment levels, average salaries, farm wages, wealth, and the "avoir des déposants part tête;" even infant mortality and the training of engineers demonstrated the split at the heart of the French territory.[113]

If underdevelopment had universal criteria, French planners believed, it also had universal cures. François Perroux's strategy of "growth poles" was applied in the Third World as well as in Europe and the U.S. This international overlap was built into Perroux's initial framework. He examined both the Ruhr—perhaps the growth pole *par excellence*—and new industrial complexes in the Soviet Urals and in Africa. His realization that growth was transmitted across space through specific poles, he said, was "imposée par l'observation des pays à croissance retardée [et] apparente dans la politique des États modernes."[114] Poor countries served as a magnifying glass for examining the challenges of transmitting growth to backwards areas. "L'isolement géographique et économique des pôle de croissance," Perroux explained, "...met en bonne lumière les obstacles à la propagation des expansions." As such, they revealed "les changements de systèmes" necessary to provoke modern growth in the backwards regions of Western nations.[115]

As Perroux's growth pole idea became a central notion for planning efforts in France as well as in much of Europe, North America, and the Third World, it symbolized the importance of international circulations and universal models in new development

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[113] Viot, "L'Aménagement du territoire en France," 32-36.
[114] Perroux, *L'Économie du XXe siècle*, 143-144.
[115] Ibid., 155, see also 167. Perroux, like Myrdal or Lajugie, notes that the terminology of development emerged in poor countries, but held up a mirror to France's own internal divisions. "Les sociétés, dont les économies sont dites sous-développées par les publications officielles des organisations internationales, représentent un cas extrême" of a broader development problem, Perroux wrote. "Les sociétés occidentales elles-mêmes, et leurs parties constituantes sont, à cet égard, inégales quant aux niveaux atteints et quant aux ressorts du développement." If the assumptions of neoclassical models about the fluid propagation of resources were disproved in "archaïques" societies, they were also "incomplets et inopérants" in "sociétés modernes"(159). The techniques used to assure "l'éveil rapide de la multitude"—education and political supervision—"vaudrait pour les vieux pays dont les ressorts de développement sont affaiblis"(155, 165).

thinking. French *aménagement du territoire* had always owed a great deal to pioneering projects in dominant countries such as Great Britain and the U.S., but after 1950 they were increasingly caught up in a broader global discussion on poverty and growth. In the meantime, the development idea sharpened the specter of internal backwardness and the need to accelerate change. This sense of urgency was nowhere more evident than in the final element of the regional development orthodoxy that emerged in the 1950s: officials' sense of their mission to transform "traditional" mindsets. As Perroux put it, even more than in terms of the technical prerequisites to industrialization, poor countries informed government experts about the "changements mentaux et sociaux d'une population qui la rendent apte" for new development.[116]

5. A New French Citizen

Rosemary Wakeman writes that *aménagement du territoire* was a crusade to "forge a new French citizen." As much as creating better agriculture, industries, or cities, French modernizers saw their job as one of leading traditional populations to a new outlook. This new mentality would be oriented to the future, embrace the sociocultural ideals of change and mobility, and adopt the economic virtues of productivity, expansion, and entrepreneurialism.[117] More than any other element of the regional development orthodoxy, this issue of legitimate attitudes revealed the tension between empowerment and control in the new development discourse. The notion that there was a rising generation of *forces vives* ready to throw off old ways of thinking could be used by young farmers or businessmen to demand government aid for their projects; boosters and workers also claimed that the social revolution in rural France justified the creation of modern factory jobs and more enlightened labor relations. In the minds of many of regional development planners, on the other hand, the discussion of traditional and modern mentalities was a top-down argument. The figure of the backwards provincial in need of reform allowed them to oppose democratic control of their projects and vilify local resistance when things went wrong.

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[116] Ibid., 155, 165, 167.
[117] Rosemary Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 42-43, 144-145, 165-166.

René Pleven, the president of Brittany's CELIB, illustrated this tension in his 1961 book on regional development. Pleven devoted long passages to the issue of collective regional psychology. He considered that centuries of poverty and isolation had created in Brittany a distinctive "character," even a separate "race qui [a été] greffée sur l'arbre français."[118] A primary goal of the West's modernization projects was therefore to overcome the "handicaps psychologiques...d'une population que son milieu naturel et son tempérament préparaient assez mal aux cadences et aux modes de vie de l'industrie et de la société modernes."[119] Pleven repackaged commonplace stereotypes of the backwards Breton into a specific narrative, designed to demand equal treatment and state aid. The Breton masses were laggards in the new industrial society, but their backwardness was not their fault. It was caused by a situation of poverty and isolation common to all peoples that broader economic forces had kept in a state of underdevelopment:

> A tous les pays de faibles revenus, de petites ressources, à l'écart des grands courants, on peut reprocher – qu'ils soient en Europe ou hors d'Europe – au même titre que le manque d'hygiène, les carences de nutrition, le goût des boissons fortes, la routine, des vues un peu étriquées dans la conduite de leurs entreprises de gagne-petit.

Above all, the Breton masses were willing to modernize. Indeed, Pleven claimed, "lorsqu'on accorde aux Bretons les moyens du progrès, ils s'y ruent, au point qu'il faut parfois les modérer."[120] As such, with proper help, rural Westerners could transition from centuries of backwardness to modernity in less than a generation.

The equalizing aspect of the argument became clear as Pleven chided government modernizers for dismissing rural Bretons' demand to be included in the dynamic of postwar growth:

> Paris, ses administrations centrales, parlent volontiers, avec un peu de condescendance d'un complexe breton, hypersensible, prompt à accuser les pouvoirs publics de laisser à l'abandon une province qui se croit des titres à être aidée...Mais ces hommes et ces femmes, volontiers silencieux, écoutent chaque jour la voix de la radio exalter les réussites françaises, qu'il s'agisse de travaux publics, d'énergie, d'industrie, d'équipement

[118] Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne*, 255, see also 43.
[119] Ibid., 47-48.
[120] Ibid., 46.

> scientifique...la Bretagne voudrait que son tour vienne...elle demande qu'on lui en donne les moyens, les mêmes moyens qu'aux autres.[121]

Pleven's position seemed to be corroborated by a series of violent agricultural protests in which the small farmers mentioned above demanded state aid to break out of their "underdevelopment." With thousands of peasants in the streets, the trope that traditional Bretons had undergone a psychological "awakening" was an effective tool for CELIB to demand that Paris fund its development initiatives.[122]

On the other hand, as development programs encountered resistance or failed, this narrative of an urgent transition from tradition to modernity gave way to a denunciation of provincial populations' resistance to progress. Regional economists were well aware of the technical obstacles to changing the geographic patterns of growth. But many argued that, in the end, traditional outlooks were the biggest impediment to regional development. In a 1957 report for the Economic Council, Jules Milhau, the engaged economist from Montpellier, wrote, "C'est dans les hommes et dans leurs oeuvres qu'il faut chercher les véritables obstacles au développement économique d'une région." Milhau provided a litany of complaints about provincial populations. French labor was particularly immobile. Traditional manufacturers and farmers resisted changes that threatened their livelihoods. More generally, the propagation of economic development "heurte les intérêts à courte vue et vient buter sur la routine, sur les habitudes, sur la paresse intellectuelle des hommes." On this point, regionalists' denunciation of Paris centralism went hand-in-hand with their denigration of provincial torpor. To a degree unparalleled in other Western countries, social ascension in France was pegged to the capital, with its monopolization of higher education, skilled labor, and the centers of power. According to Milhau, that left the regions "écrémées" in their human capital. Provincial decline became a self-reinforcing spiral as the most dynamic residents fled areas associated with intellectual stagnation. "La province," Milhau explained, "signifie pour beaucoup de nos jeunes gens: vieillesse, stagnation, étroitesse d'esprit, voire ignorance."[123]

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[121] Ibid., 35-37.
[122] Martray, *Vingt ans*, 125-136.
[123] Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique*, 17-32.

For Milhau, the way to reverse this trend was a more forceful state intervention. The Montpellier booster used Perroux's notion of growth poles to legitimate the massive injection of outside elites and external capital into underdeveloped regions. Growth poles came in a number of guises. The new "regional development companies" created in the rural south would bring in irrigated water, expert advisors, and outside farmers to modernize Mediterranean agriculture. The recently discovered natural-gas deposits in Lacq likewise offered an ideal opportunity to create a high-tech industrial complex. But the new nuclear power facility in the run-down area around Marcoule and even the creation of a sizeable branch factory could do the trick. The important point was for outside forces to generate "une volonté d'action et d'innovations dans un milieu inerte, prisonnier de ses structures, de son passé, de ses routines. Selon l'expression de F. Perroux, le pôle de croissance a un effet déstabilisant."[124]

However, even big state programs were not guaranteed to upend provincial society. A decade after Milhau presented his prescriptions, most of the programs he had cited faced opposition and disappointing results. The nuclear site at Marcoule had stoked the hostility of local residents, isolated from the site and stuck with the bill for its social overhead.[125] The regional development companies were denouncing recalcitrant southern farmers, who refused to give up their vineyards to grow irrigated fruits and vegetables.[126] And the Lacq gas deposits were an even bigger disappointment. They had become a national symbol of dependent development. Like Third World oil complexes, outside firms exported a raw material and profits to dominant industrial centers—especially the Paris region—imported managers and engineers, and generated few local jobs.[127]

There were plenty of reasons that the Lacq gas did not generate more local spin-offs, first and foremost the government's decision to pipe it out of the southwest rather

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[124] Ibid.

[125] Hecht writes that the creation of nuclear sites was presented as "a drama of regional salvation and redemption"—especially for Marcoule, since the Gard department was poor and experiencing a local economic and demographic decline. However, residents in Marcoule ended up viewing the process as "a wholesale invasion by the modern state." By contrast, those in the town of Chinon, which received a similar plant, "seemed to sublimate it and to concentrate instead on the economic benefits." Gabrielle Hecht, *The Radiance of France: Nuclear Power and National Identity after World War II* (Boston: MIT Press, 1998), 7, 209-210, 269.

[126] I take this up in chapter 5.

[127] Philippe Aydalot cited in Hansen, *French Regional Planning*, 181-182.

than to keep consumption local. But in nearby Bordeaux, Joseph Lajugie concluded that in the failure,

> le rôle essentiel semble bien être celui des facteurs psychologiques et humains. Le degré de réceptivité des responsables de l'économie régionale et des dirigeants des entreprises aux impulsions venues des pôles constituent, sans doute, la véritable clé de la propagation de l'essor...Il s'agit de leur faire franchir le 'seuil' nécessaire pour substituer aux préférences régionales de structures traditionnelles le sens de l'innovation caractéristique du véritable esprit d'entreprise.[128]

For Lajugie, southern France was a dual economy. Parisian industry and elites were decentralizing to the region in growing numbers. But they remained juxtaposed, rather than integrated, to the southwest's traditional manufacturing and farm population. A gap in capacities, dynamism, and outlook still separated modern and traditional France.

As ambitious hopes for national integration and "spin-off" growth were disappointed, the Bordeaux economist laid responsibility for *aménagement du territoire*'s failures at the feet of its intended beneficiaries: traditional provincials. As was the case for Milhau in Languedoc and Pleven in Brittany, Lajugie's work in Bordeaux showed that the flip-side of provincial modernizers' vision of rapid social improvement and their bottom-up fight to win development aid from Paris was often a claim to political control back at home and the denigration of people who resisted their vision of the future.

Conclusion

Joseph Lajugie pioneered and personified the regional development orthodoxies of 1950s France. As part of a new field of provincial growth coalitions and regional economists, he set out to demonstrate that France was divided in two, with a modern industrial core and its backward rural periphery. This Manichean vision of national imbalance had a specific political purpose: to convince national and local officials of the urgency of transforming underdeveloped regions into a modern industrial society. As such, no one hailed the 1955 legislation more than Lajugie, who considered it a historic breakthrough that transformed France from a laggard in regional development into an

[128] Joseph Lajugie, "Blocages et freinages de croissance en Aquitaine," *Tiers-Monde* 8 (1967): 216. For an indication of the durability of this analysis, see Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 162-163. On Lacq in general, see Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City*, 106, 164-166.

unprecedented exemplar of comprehensive territorial planning.[129] The Bordeaux economist took his initial inspiration from Gravier, but he soon turned abroad for much of his thinking—traveling to French West Africa, bringing the idea of underdevelopment back in his luggage, and embracing an international planning literature on topics such as growth poles and the economic transition of rural regions with surplus farm labor into balanced industrial economies. Last but not least, Lajugie saw the new development programs being hatched by engaged economists and central planners as universal recipes for modernization, which in turn made resistance a futile effort that would only place lagging regions further behind the leaders. As the sense of regional crisis and the expectations for state-led development reached a feverish pitch in France, here was the conceptual framework and the policymaking cadre that would assure the transition from the stalled efforts of the postwar years to the crusading *dirigisme* of the 1960s.

[129] Lajugie, "Décentralisation industrielle."

CHAPTER FIVE

Territory in the Era of Decolonization

Empire and decolonization shaped the growing denunciation of territorial inequalities and the debate on how to modernize provincial France. Observers had long drawn parallels between the provinces and the colonies. Already in the 1830s, elite observers called the southwestern Landes "our African Sahara" and planted vast pine forests there in a strategy of reclamation. Eighty years later, one observer still thought that the area's resin-tapping settlements seemed to be "in some African land, a gathering of huts grouped in the shadow of the Republic's flag."[1] In the first decades of the twentieth century, Breton regionalists complained that the West was an internal colony; the Communist Party did as much for the recently recovered region of Alsace.[2] And when *aménagement du territoire* emerged in the 1940s, planners used the term colonization with a positive connotation, as a metaphor for the rational planning of the national territory.[3]

However, two things were particular to postwar France. One was the sheer extent to which colonization and decolonization became metaphors for regional relations within

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[1] Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 487-489.

[2] On Brittany, see Florent Le Bot and Fabrice Marzin, "Le Mai 1968 breton et ses acteurs face à une révolution pompidolienne en matière d'économie des territoires," in *1968, entre libération et libéralisation: La grande bifurcation*, ed. Danielle Tartakowsky and Michel Margairaz (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010). On Alsace, see Pierre Deyon, *Paris et ses provinces: Le défi de la décentralisation (1770-1992)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992), 106.

[3] Gravier initially made "internal colonization" an organizing concept of his development vision. Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français* (Paris: Flammarion, 1947), 292-294 and see below. Other planners rejected the internal colonialism idea as inappropriate in an "old" country where planning had to compose with a human geography rooted in history, a feature that was supposedly absent among primitive peoples or the vast expanses of the U.S. and Brazilian hinterlands. See Gabriel Dessus in "La décentralisation des entreprises," conference at the ESOP, 12 September 1943, CAC 19770777/3; Alfred Sauvy, "Répartition géographique des hommes du point de vue du démographe," presentation to CCEPAN, April 1951, CAC 19770783/3.

the Hexagon.[4] In his classic study of *Centralisation et décentralisation dans le débat politique français*, the political scientist Yves Mény wrote

> il n'est plus question à propos du problème régional que 'd'administration coloniale,' 'd'impérialisme glouton,' 'de l'oppression que les peuples périphériques (basques, bretons, flamands, etc.) subissent dans le cadre de la prétendue nation française,' 'de l'administration directe' qu'exerce l'État sur la province...L'effet de choc du terme 'colonisation' a joué ses effets auprès des militants ou d'hommes politiques sensibilisés parfois de façon aiguë aux problèmes coloniaux.[5]

As Mény insinuates, the second novelty of postwar France was the degree to which the colonial metaphor was rooted in actually existing empire. Thousands of administration officials, social scientists, and ordinary citizens circulated through the imperial state in the 1950s. Many more politicians, boosters, and regionalists were influenced by the national drama of trying to modernize "Overseas France" and then coping with its demise. In the process, state-led development became one arena where a colonial history profoundly influenced metropolitan affairs.[6] As the radical regionalist Robert Lafont put it, empire and decolonization were central in convincing postwar leaders to "*repenser la France.*"[7]

For Lafont, the lesson of empire was clear: regional development needed to empower local communities. The Gaullist version of *aménagement du territoire* claimed to develop the provinces but in reality installed the power of central administrators, promoted the interests of national corporations, and privileged the installation of elite outsiders in local communities. Such a top-down version of modernization was nothing more than "internal colonialism" and would inevitably provoke a provincial revolt to reclaim control over cultures and economies.[8] Yet Lafont's Left regionalist view was only one way of viewing France's imperial history. As the postwar attempt to save a

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[4] Lebovics goes so far as to claim that colonization "became *the* prime way of characterizing relations between Paris and the regions" among Left regionalists. Herman Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home: France in the Global Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 20, 184.
[5] Yves Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation dans le débat politique français, 1945-1969* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1974), 52, 485.
[6] For a statement on the need for research linking colonies and metropoles caught in an interactive dynamic, see Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[7] Italics in original. Robert Lafont, *La Révolution régionaliste* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), 19.
[8] Robert Lafont, *Décoloniser en France: Les régions face à l'Europe (Paris*: Gallimard, 1971), 9-12.

world of empires provoked unprecedented spending on modernization programs overseas, many promoters of provincial economies demanded that the government bring those efforts back home—claiming with little hesitation that the "French desert" in the metropole was equally needy as the colonial expanses across the Mediterranean. State administrators drew much the same parallel, but saw it as a reason to import the exceptional *dirigisme* created overseas in the name of rapidly modernizing societies and economies. And workers and peasants took their own lessons from the colonial situation, in a hodge-podge of social movements whose demands only sometimes converged with the bottom-up regionalism pioneered by Lafont and other New Left leaders.

Empire and decolonization thus had diverse impacts on debates about French modernization. No case demonstrates the magnitude and the complexity of this issue better than that of the regional development corporations created in the mid-1950s to reconvert agriculture in Languedoc and Corsica. As the semi-public companies turned to former colonial officials to implement their controversial programs and filled their new model farms with *pieds noirs* streaming back from North Africa, the growing denunciation of the company's internal colonialism took on a stunningly literal meaning. As Corsican activists used anger with the *colons* to forge France's most durably violent autonomist movement, it was clear that the metaphor of nation as empire—invented during the nineteenth century to describe the Hexagon's disjointed kaleidoscope of local *terroirs*—retained all its power to shape the debate on postwar inequalities.

1. Real Empire and Colonial Metaphors

No group had a monopoly on the colonial metaphor. On the contrary, it was mobilized for an array of political projects. Much of the circulation of bodies and ideas through France's empire came from state agents. Not the least of them was the Finance Minister who oversaw the creation of France's regional development regime in 1955, Pierre Pflimlin (1955-1956). Pflimlin's previous ministerial assignment had been Overseas France, in 1952-1953. The former head of the colonial administration was explicit about the overseas origins of the development idea he did so much to propagate in the metropole. Underdevelopment was "un vocable qui naguère ne s'appliquaient qu'aux pays arriérés d'Asie, d'Afrique ou d'Amérique du Sud," he told a group of scholars in 1955, but "il est admis maintenant que cette expression soit employée même

pour la métropole."[9] Pflimlin claims in his memoirs that the system of regional development planning he instituted in 1955—his signature measure—was directly inspired by his earlier experience initiating such plans in Africa. As would be the case in metropolitan France, the goal of increasing production and well-being justified a contentious centralization of power.[10]

The Finance Minister had lots of company. Thousands of metropolitan officials, engineers, and social scientists went to bolster overseas administrations and modernization projects in the 1950s. Even students at the elite École Nationale d'Administration and École des Ponts et Chaussées began doing their internships across the Mediterranean.[11] In return, after decolonization a large number of officials from the colonial civil service were offered the opportunity to join the metropolitan administration. That point distinguished France from its imperial neighbor Britain, which pushed its colonial agents into retirement or reconversion, and thus had fewer "colonial returns."[12]

Provincial politicians also seized the colonial parallel. The internal colonial analysis is often associated with the Left, but it was just as often seized on the Right and by pro-business boosters. A prominent early use of the concept came from the Breton René Pleven, who had himself been Colonial Minister—and the organizer of the Brazzaville conference—in 1944. In 1961, Pleven demanded the industrialization of the rural West with the complaint:

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[9] Pierre Pflimlin "Conférence faite à la Société d'économie politique de Lyon le 3 octobre 1955," CAEF 5A/2.

[10] Pflimlin concludes: "Ainsi, sur le plan économique, j'avais déjà appliqué les idées que j'ai essayé de mettre en pratique plus tard comme Ministre des Finances pour les régions de la métropole: établir pour chacun de nos Territoires d'outre-mer un plan de développement." Pierre Pflimlin and Daniel Riot, *Entretiens avec Pierre Pflimlin: Itinéraires d'un Européen* (Strasbourg: Nuée bleue, 1989), 129-130.

[11] Michel Marié, *Les Terres et les mots: Une traversée des sciences sociales* (Paris: Meridiens Klincksieck, 1989), 33. Some ENA students had done this since the school's founding, in 1946, but in 1956 it was decided to send entire graduating classes, or *promotions*, overseas in order to feed the immense personnel needs for Algerian administrative reforms especially. See CAC 19790447/230. The students, who were required to write reports at the end of their internships, often expressed the sentiment of M. Ducamin: development projects allowed the immersion in new economic planning; meanwhile, administering "un peuple encore peu évolué" allowed experimenting with a "pouvoir fort mais justement pourquoi ne pas oser le dire, d'un paternalisme conscient et systématique," and to "comprendre combien peut être noble ce rôle de tutelle." Ducamin report, CAC 19790447/286.

[12] Anthony Kirk-Greene, "Decolonization: The Ultimate Diaspora," *Journal of Contemporary History* 36 (2001): 140-141, 144; Anthony Kirk-Greene, *Britain's Imperial Administrators, 1858-1966* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 260-273; William B. Cohen, *Rulers of Empire: The French Colonial Service in Africa* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1971), 194-195; Véronique Dimier, "De la décolonisation à la décentralisation: histoire de préfets 'coloniaux'," *Politix* 53 (2001): 213-218.

> L'économie bretonne a été articulée à l'économie nationale dans des conditions fort voisines de celles qui réglaient jadis les rapports des métropoles avec leurs colonies. Celles-ci fournissaient les matières premières, transformées par les industries métropolitaines, qui leur revendaient les produits manufacturés. Un tel régime ne peut jamais durer de façon permanente...La Bretagne en est à ce stade.[13]

Likewise, boosters in the western Loire valley had no qualms about claiming, "Fondamentalement, l'Ouest français correspond au type de régions les plus déshéritées du monde. Si cette région n'entrait pas dans le contexte français, si elle se situait en Afrique ou en Asie, ses potentialités ne la différencieraient en rien des autres régions déshéritées."[14] Even Jean-François Gravier revamped his classic analysis of *Paris et le désert français* in internal colonial jargon.[15] Brittany and the Mezzogiorno, like Indonesia and Cameroon, had shifted the struggle for social equality from class to territory.[16]

If the parallel to Overseas France allowed politicians to make claims and administration officials to assert their modernization agenda, in the 1960s the "internal colonial concept" became heavily associated with a new Left regionalism that criticized the administration's development policies—and sometimes challenged the regional development orthodoxy altogether.[17] The Occitanist Robert Lafont did more than anybody to popularize this reading of colonial parallels. For Lafont, postwar development policies had aggravated, not eliminated, uneven and dependent development. The state, big corporations, and a comprador bourgeoisie spread low-quality jobs, seized provincial resources, and generally dispossessed peripheral

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[13] René Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1961), 144.

[14] L. Lammers, "L'Europe a ses régions sous-développées," *Bulletin de l'Association Nationale pour l'Etude de la Communauté de la Loire*, January 1962, CAC 19770818/10.

[15] "Ainsi, dans tous les domaines, l'agglomération parisienne s'est comportée depuis 1850...comme un groupe 'monopoleur' dévorant la substance nationale...Cette dépendance absolue est bien le propre du régime colonial." Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français en 1972* (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), 60 and chapter three, "La période coloniale."

[16] Cited in Jean-Pierre Gaudin, *L'Aménagement de la société: Politiques, savoirs, représentations sociales, la production de l'espace aux XIXème et XXème siècles* (Paris: Anthropos, 1979), 269.

[17] On the internal colonial concept, see: Robert J. Hind, "The Internal Colonial Concept," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26 (1984); Clyde Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community: Planning, Politics and Social Context* (New York: Wiley, 1984); Lafont, *La Révolution régionaliste*; Lafont, *Décoloniser en France*. Mény, 368-384, 475-485. Lebovics calls this "Postcolonial Regionalism" and even argues that colonization "became *the* prime way of characterizing relations between Paris and the regions" among regionalists. It is "an as yet unwritten chapter to the history of the development of the French Left." Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home*, 20, 184.

populations of their regional economies. Moreover, according to Lafont, for many provincial "ethnies" this political and economic domination was coupled with their cultural alienation. A development policy more attentive to social equality and local control, rooted in a Proudhonian federalism, was his solution.[18]

Several New Left regionalists dropped Lafont's emphasis on culture and federalist demands. Focused on more tried and true issues of regionalization and *aménagement du territoire*, they mostly used the internal colonial idea to shock the mainstream Left out of its traditional Jacobinism.[19] The founding event of this political strain was Michel Rocard's report "Décoloniser la province," presented at a 1966 Socialist congress. Rocard epitomizes the extent to which a generation of French leaders exposed to the horrors of real empire nonetheless used colonialism as a metaphor for relatively moderate economic and political propositions back home. Rocard, an early proponent of Algerian independence, had written a damning first-hand report of the atrocities of wartime resettlement camps in 1959. Still, he did not hesitate to claim that regions like Brittany and Languedoc were "des exemples peu discutables de situations coloniales."[20]

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[18] Other authors, like the Breton Morvan Lebesque and Pierre Fougeyrolles, took less of a socioeconomic analysis to emphasize this cultural and political facet of regional domination. See Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation*, 368-384.

[19] Ibid., 479, 485-486. Indeed, the most prominent author in this vein, Michel Phlipponneau, was a founding figure of the CELIB and took the *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* drawn up by a government study commission in 1962 as the blueprint of the dawning Socialist regionalism. Michel Phlipponneau, *La Gauche et les régions* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1967).

[20] Rocard's assessment of colonialism was based on inequalities in wealth, economic exchange, and decision-making power. Michel Rocard, "Décoloniser la province: Rapport général proposé par le Comité d'initiative aux délibérations des colloques sur la vie régionale en France," (1966), 2. On the camps, see Benjamin Stora, Jane Marie Todd, and William B. Quandt, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 75. Likewise, in 1970, the Lorraine politician Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber declared, "la guerre coloniale est maintenant en France," to defend his district's claim on a government investment project. Cited in Lafont, *Décoloniser en France*, 65. In a similar vein, Martin Evans recounts his interview with a French sympathizer of the FLN who, upon his return from Algeria, fought to "decolonize" his native Occitania. Martin Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War, 1954-1962* (New York: Berg, 1997), 113. Originally cited in Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 280. Perhaps more surprising is the case of the former colonial administrator Yves Peron. After decolonization, Peron became a prominent African historian and a Breton regionalist (and supporter of the Parti socialiste unifié); he defended cultural minorities both in Europe and Africa. As René Lamarchand puts it: "Tout comme ses origines bretonnes, l'ont sensibilisé dès le départ aux phénomènes d'oppression culturelle de l'Afrique coloniale et post-coloniale, ceux-ci ont également nourri son combat contre l'État centralisateur de la France giscardienne. 'A mon père, colonisateur et colonisé,' cette dédicace qui figure en tête de sa thèse magistrale sur Samori résume parfaitement la nature de ses affinités." René Lemarchand and Myron J. Echenberg, "Yves Person (1925-1982)," *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 17 (1983). My thanks to Mamadou Diouf for pointing out this connection.

Social movements also integrated the anti-colonial rhetoric, especially when their struggles took on a regional or *autogestionnaire* character. That was true in the pioneering 1961-1962 miners strike at Decazeville. Area residents joined the workers to defend a regional industry that even national unions had abandoned.[21] The internal colonial idea was also present in the wave of strikes at the CSF plant in Brest in the 1968 period. Here the idiom rooted in real empire. Some of the Breton unionists drew on memories of the Algerian War to denounce their dependency on the company's Paris headquarters, which was more interested in corporate mergers than in the region's job situation. Others denounced their authoritarian factory managers, some of whom had been recruited among former French settlers in Algeria. As one CSF worker complained, "ils nous prenaient pour des 'Bougnoules.'"[22] Likewise, French regionalism and liberation movements abroad were connected by more than just metaphor at the famous defense of Larzac's farms against state appropriation of land for a military base in the 1970s. The Larzac protesters forged durable connections with Third World and minority movements, such as the Kanak autonomists in New Caledonia and the American Indian Movement.[23]

Not everybody agreed with the colonial metaphor. When small farmers in the West identified themselves with Algerian Muslims, setting off a debate in the national press about France's "underdeveloped" regions, a *Le Monde* article complained about the language. The Western farmers were not the peasants of yore stuck in a timeless poverty, it argued. On the contrary, their problem was that they had sunk lots of money into modernization projects, and were now tied to market forces. This was "une révolte d'hommes du XXème siècle," not "des 'sous-développés' qui réclament leur accession au progrès technique."[24] Moreover, insubordination had an ambivalent impact. If they could earn government concessions for the troublemakers, a peasant *jacquerie* or a wildcat strike fed a public fascination for internal savagery—and overlapped with the discourse that state officials used to intervene in these social movements.[25] Political

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[21] On Decazeville, see Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation*, 375, 382-383.
[22] Vincent Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons: Conflits d'usines, conflits identitaires en Bretagne dans les années 68* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 69-70, 106-108.
[23] Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home*, 20, 38-39.
[24] "La Bretagne après l'orage paysan," *Le Monde*, 16-17 July 1961.
[25] Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 138.

scientist Yves Mény took these critiques even further. A colonial vocabulary "si lourd d'évocations et de passions" in 1960s France had the merit of raising awareness about the regional problem, he wrote. But it also seemed excessive, hid more than it revealed about regional relations, and perhaps did as much harm as good to the Left and regionalist causes. "En appliquant indistinctement le concept de colonialisme à la situation de la Bretagne ou à celle de l'Angola," Mény warned, "on risque de ne pas entraîner l'adhésion ou de dénaturer le vocabulaire originel. Ces excès de langage...servent d'épouvantail facile aux adversaires de la régionalisation."[26]

However, with even the economists of the Hudson Institute using the colonial metaphor—literally comparing Corsica to Angola in a report for government planners—such qualms seemed to fall on deaf ears.[27] As the end of empire crossed paths with the founding of the Fifth Republic, French men and women made unprecedented use of the colonial metaphor—to demand aid for the provinces, to justify a centralized program of social and economic engineering, or to denounce the tensions and inequalities created by the state's development projects.

A Model for Regional Equalization

If colonies came to symbolize the unacceptability of territorial inequalities, it was thanks to international challenges to real empire. In the interwar years, some French planners, engineers, and social reformers had portrayed the colonies as a laboratory for new experiments in their fields. According to this ideal, the free hand and missionary zeal of the colonizer would open the door to projects that got bogged down at home due to red tape, parliamentary democracy, and complacency. However, French governments largely rejected the main prerequisite for such endeavors: the use of metropolitan money for overseas improvements that did not generate direct profits.[28] That began to change in

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[26] Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation*, 52, 375, 475-479, 485.
[27] The Hudson Institute wrote, "La Corse est à la France ce que l'Angola est au Portugal," in a report for the DATAR. Cited in Front Régionaliste Corse, *Main basse sur une île* (Paris: J. Martineau, 1971), 19.
[28] Paul Rabinow, *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 277, 289; Gwendolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1991), 326-327; Marié, *Les Terres et les mots*, 29-57; Michel Marié, ed., *L'Aménagement du territoire et la colonie* (Paris: Délégation à la recherche et à l'innovation, 1988), 78; Hélène Vacher, *Projection coloniale et ville rationalisée, le rôle de l'espace colonial dans la constitution de l'urbanisme en France, 1900-1931* (Aalborg: Aalborg University Press, 1997). Marié draws on Paul Rabinow to assert that most French officials brought technocratic lessons back from the colonies—spatial

the 1940s, as the legitimacy of empire was profoundly shaken. French officials broke with the principle of colonial financial self-sufficiency and began investing in overseas projects that would only turn a profit in the long run, if ever. The new development agenda was meant not only to increase the production of overseas goods, but also to improve poor living standards and restore the legitimacy of "Greater France." In addition, it ratified the notion that colonial subjects could be elevated to "modern" standards of living and production. As Africans used this new framework to demand aid and equalization from Paris, French spending on overseas modernization spiked upwards.[29]

It was therefore a specific version of empire—one invested as much in development as in rule and repression—that sent so many Frenchmen overseas in the 1950s. The extreme case of such circulation was Algeria. Officially, Algeria was an integral part of France, unlike colonies and protectorates. In the 1950s, Paris took steps to further integrate the North African department into the metropolitan administration and rolled out increasingly important development projects. As Todd Shepard writes, this attempt to prove that "Algeria is France" led to "[a]n extension of political rights and

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planning, a faith in central technocratic oversight, and the application of abstract models based on "l'ignorance des réalités singulières et des sociétés locales." However, he himself brought back from Algeria a resistance to such top-down approaches. For the broader debate on the topic of governmental innovations in African colonies, see Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 142-145; Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 80.

[29] That made development as much as repression a reason for new calculations that showed the unsustainability of empire. At that point, development went from being a concept that justified empire to serving as a framework for the transition to a postcolonial relationship of "cooperation" between France and newly independent nations. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 186-190; Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

economic assistance unparalleled in the history of Western overseas imperialism."[30] At the same time, some 450,000 French soldiers left to fight in the Algerian War.[31]

Industrializing Algeria was at the center of France's development effort. In many respects, this project paralleled attempts to decentralize industry to provincial France, but it was more clearly driven by social unrest and the contestation of French rule. The first calls for an industrial Algeria were made in the 1930s. Like in the mainland, the military goal of decentralizing defense production in the buildup to World War II was a key motivation for this program and saw through most of its early realizations. But Algeria's unprecedented economic and political crisis created a new justification for industrialization that would survive after the war. French governments sought to douse the mix of poverty and unemployment, which in their eyes fed social contestation and the new nationalist politics. A central problem was creating enough jobs to keep pace with Algeria's rapid population growth. Agricultural modernization and migration would be part of that equation, but colonial reformers began to argue that only industrialization could do the trick. That meant breaking with "le pacte colonial"—the imperial division of labor in which France monopolized manufacturing while its colonies provided raw materials.[32]

The principle of a new industrialization program was ratified by Vichy officials, but the political will to put it into action only emerged in the mid-1950s—again following the chronology of metropolitan *aménagement du territoire*. The disappointing results of the early postwar years showed that French industry had little incentive to decentralize production to Algeria so long as the territory's markets were open to metropolitan

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[30] Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 45, 271. Much of the question of how Algeria fit into French economic development was up for grabs until the early 1960s. French officials initially attempted to use regional development to show that Algeria was a French province like the others, before reworking that geographic and economic assumption at the moment of decolonization. See Muriam Haleh Davis, "Restaging Mise en Valeur: 'Postwar Imperialism' and the Plan de Constantine," *Review of Middle East Studies* 44 (2011).

[31] Daniel Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie: La France et sa colonie, 1930-1962* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005), 423. The idea that France was in Algeria to fight development also became an alternative portrayal to the idea that they were there primarily to fight a war. French international propaganda tried to argue, in Matthew Connelly's words, that "[i]nstead of fighting Algerians, France was waging 'a war against the underdevelopment of their land.'" Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 222. On the mixture of repression and development, see also Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 346, 368.

[32] I draw all the above from Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*. For a summary of the discursive rupture in French approaches to Algeria that reformers operated during the 1930s, see especially p. 153-155.

manufactures. Industrialization would have to be a political project, supported by the French government and taxpayer. Political unrest was crucial in making Paris officials swallow that pill. Just as French planners were trimming back their expectations, the Toussaint rebellion of 1954 convinced them to switch course and envision an ambitious industrialization program. Over the next few years, officials in Algiers drew up a ten-year development plan, which they presented as the first step towards the eventual equalization of living standards in Algeria and mainland France.[33] When Charles de Gaulle returned to power, after the Algiers putsch of 1958, he announced a monumental development program known as the Constantine Plan. De Gaulle promised the creation of some 400,000 new jobs in Algeria in 5 years, agricultural land reform, and a 6 percent annual growth in living standards, alongside equally ambitious social programs.[34]

The Constantine Plan provoked the direct intervention of metropolitan planners in Algerian economic affairs, in contrast to the looser oversight they had exercised since 1945. Maurice Byé—whom we met in the last chapter as the president of the Regional Affairs Commission in the metropolitan Economic Council—headed the 1958 commission that prepared Paris' new development agenda. The head of the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP), Pierre Massé, was the honorary president of a new Conseil supérieur du plan en Algérie.[35] These Parisian officials imported the metropolitan planning apparatus, but De Gaulle's agenda for Algeria turned much of their economic tradition on its head. France's "indicative" planning sought to inflect market trends and evaluated programs based on their comparative costs and "profitability" (*rentabilité*) for the national economy. In Algeria, on the other hand, the planners began with politically determined goals for social uplift and scrambled to meet them, seemingly at any cost.[36] Indeed, CGP officials were often more aggressive than the Algerian administration itself.[37] Tens of thousands of industrial jobs needed to be created

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[33] Paul Delouvrier spoke of elevating Algerians to "la dignité de l'homme conçu à notre mode occidental," Ibid., 368, see also 350.

[34] Ibid., 374.. The social facet of the program included rapid school and housing production, an equalization of salaries, and the preferential hiring of Muslims in the civil service.

[35] Ibid., 362-363, 370-372.

[36] On the primacy of political goals over economic calculations, see Ibid., 372-374, 414.. More generally on the political impetus of the development initiative, see Lefeuvre 256, 274-275, 365.

[37] The CGP argued that liberal development recipes like subsidies to industry were woefully inadequate. Indeed, they initially argued that protectionist trade barriers were the only practical solution to the backwash effects that France exercised on the Algerian economy, although this strategy was ultimately

immediately. Growth had to be pushed out to inland regions, towns, and rural areas, reversing the dramatic concentration of investments and population in Algiers and other coastal locations. Above all, government experts struggled with the sheer degree of center-periphery imbalance that resulted from the attempt to fully integrate Algeria with France—or as one official put it, an underdeveloped country with one of the world's leading economies.[38]

French planners' experimentation with unorthodox state intervention was proportional to this ambition of forging a single nation out of profoundly unequal economies. Already between 1941 and 1945, the administration gave Algiers the right to offer tax breaks, subsidies, and loan guarantees for new factories. By contrast, local governments in the metropole were only allowed to give tax breaks after 1953. The regional policies created for the mainland provinces in 1955 were extended across the Mediterranean, often at substantially more attractive rates.[39] Finally, the government undertook initiatives that Paris had been telling metropolitan boosters the state could not do in a liberal economy. Algeria got a public investment fund analogous to Italy's *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*. In a more spectacular measure, the government set aside laws on bidding for government contracts to reserve a 15 percent quota of all civil and military expenditures—on both sides of the Mediterranean—for Algerian production.[40] Last but not least, the government cranked up *dirigiste* pressure on French industry, twisting the arms of company presidents to push new factories across the Mediterranean.[41] By the

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rejected. However, trade liberalization meant that the economic aid package would have to be just that much bigger. Ibid., 356-358, 363-365, 383-384.

[38] Ibid., 351, 378, and on French industry's preference for exporting manufactured goods rather than production, see 482.

[39] New factories in Algeria could get twice as much of a direct subsidy as in the provinces, and unlike in the metropole these measures applied to local manufacturers, not just decentralizing Parisians. The state undertook a vast program of industrial parks of all sizes, from the vast industrial port complexes and industrial new towns to suburban tracts near medium-sized cities in the interior. The government also gave preferential energy rates to Algerian production. Ibid., 251, 360-362, 371, 377-400.

[40] The quota was above and beyond the spectacular increase in public spending created by war spending and state-subsidized housing and urbanization programs. Earlier, Defense officials had used military contracts to promote Algerian industry. Ibid., 271-273, 381.

[41] The administration hoped to implement a coordinated plan for industrial takeoff. Heavy-industry centers, such as the industrial port development in Bône and the related exploitation of Saharan hydrocarbons, were meant to serve as growth poles. Meanwhile, the government ratcheted up the creation of transformation industries, which would create jobs, and the expansion of sectors like textiles that could be dispersed into the hinterland. On state negotiations with big companies, especially the steel and chemicals industries, see Ibid., 426-448. The government undertook equally ambitious rural development programs. Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 353, 374.

end of the 1950s, Paris was directing industrial investment and infrastructure in Algeria in staggering proportions.[42]

This investment did not pay off in terms of job creation, the government's foremost objective. By 1961, only 14,000 jobs had been created—less than a quarter of the target for that point in the plan.[43] However, that did not stop metropolitan regionalists from making a jealous comparison of government efforts at home and abroad. Paris had promised to create 50,000 new industrial jobs per year for Algeria's 8 million Muslims. By comparison, metropolitan regional policy was creating around 20,000 new jobs annually for all of provincial France. The Constantine Plan seemed to consecrate an overseas development effort that outstripped what Paris was doing for modernization at home.[44]

It was not long before provincial politicians and their allies in the administration demanded the same development aid as was being doled out in the rest of the French Union.[45] In 1953, a number of ministries invoked the Algerian model to request that the government take regional job creation into account when attributing public contracts to industry.[46] That idea was repeatedly floated in the upcoming years, to no avail.[47] In 1955, Finance Minister Pierre Pflimlin not only drew on his colonial experience to design

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[42] According to one government report, various public subsidies accounted for 38.5 percent of investments; total state participation in capital rose to 86 percent once preferential loans, advances, and capital participation were added in. The amount varied by sector. Public funds also provided much of the demand for Algerian industry, both through military spending and due to the government's massive public building programs. A whopping 97 percent of all the construction materials produced in Algeria in 1961 were used in state projects. Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 419-425. Even as de Gaulle initiated the Constantine Plan, Connelly writes, "privately he had already begun to complain that economic integration would require 'a ruinous effort.'" Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*, 179.

[43] Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 410. On the success and failure of the Constantine Plan, Daniel Lefeuvre offers a mixed evaluation. Industrial investments in Algeria more than doubled and thousands of industrial jobs were created. However, far from achieving a self-sustaining "take-off," this growth was directly dependent on state funding; job creation fell far below the Plan's unrealistic targets; most benefits went to French companies, not local manufacturers; and growth remained concentrated in Algiers and the littoral. Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 401-425.

[44] The FDES estimated 39,163 new industrial jobs in 1959-1960; the CGP estimated 43,163 jobs for the same period. G. Poulin, Groupe de travail Industrie de la CREE du CELIB, "Les Aspects financiers du problème industriel breton," December 1961, ADIV 1076W/56.

[45] As the Inspector General of the National Economy wrote in 1960, the that fact Algeria benefited from a more generous regime of industrial subsidies "constitue, pour les régions les plus déshéritées du territoire métropolitain, un motif valable de réclamer un régime comparable." IGEN, "Note sur les moyens qui peuvent être mis en oeuvre," 29 April 1960, CAEF B/45774.

[46] Jean Faucheux, presentation to the Comité interministériel permanent des études économiques sur le marché de l'emploi, 7 December 1953, CAEF B/16125.

[47] Pierre Sudreau, "Mesures qui pourraient être prises pour freiner la concentration démographique dans l'agglomération parisienne," ca. 1957-1958, Pierre Sudreau papers, CHAN 91AJ/25.

new regional development plans for the provinces, but also created the Fonds de développement économique et social (FDES) to fund them. Like the FIDES created for the colonies a decade earlier, the FDES concretized the new principle that local territories should not be expected to pay for their own modernization.[48] Provincial demands only grew as Paris increased spending in Algeria. The Constantine Plan immediately became a reference for provincial representatives. In 1960, the president of the Social and Economic Council, Émile Roche, called upon the government to "envisager des opérations de grande envergure [for metropolitan France] de l'importance de celle que le Constantine Plan a prévue pour remédier au sous-développement de l'Algérie."[49]

In Brittany, the powerful regional lobbying group CELIB used the same argument to demand government implementation of its own "Breton Plan." Paris refused to recognize the Breton initiative. Michel Debré claimed that the government could only fund regional development as part of a nationwide plan; it was not about to start doling out investment packages region by region. But the national territorial planning that Debré evoked lingered in CGP study commissions for almost a decade. By contrast, state modernizers had launched the Constantine Plan in a matter of months. Clearly, where there was a will, there was a way to do regional development quickly. As René Pleven complained, "une nation qui a consacré à l'aide aux pays, territoires et départements d'outre-mer, entre avril 1946 et décembre 1959, plusieurs milliards d'anciens francs, ne manque pas des ressources nécessaires."[50] The CELIB seized upon another overseas precedent to make its case. Paris had just conceded the DOMTOM—France's "old colonies," which had just been integrated into the national polity—a financial "program-law" that guaranteed development funding over multiple years. The Bretons asked for

[48] Likewise, the centralization of the new funds to finance modernization programs in a single FDES was inspired by the imperial FIDES. Chalendon note on the *projet de décret* for the Fonds de reconversion, Simon Nora personal archives, CHSP, Dossiers 6 and 6.1. (Need date etc.) Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats," 70; Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization?* (London: Berg Publishers, 2002), 63, 88. On the FDES and the FIDES from Paris' perspective, see Laure Quennouelle-Corre, *La Direction du Trésor, 1947-1967: L'État-banquier et la croissance* (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 2000).
[49] Emile Roche, "Il faut différencier les actions en faveur de l'expansion régionale," *Le Moniteur*, 30 January 1960, 17-18, ADIV 99W/270.
[50] Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne*, 256.

their own program-law, turning the demand into their rallying cry for the next decade.[51] The CELIB borrowed other ideas from the Algerian modernization recipe.[52]

However, Paris' effort across the Mediterranean was too rich for even these boosters to digest. The CELIB's 1962 report on industrial investments calculated that if Paris applied the Algerian quota for public purchases to Brittany on a per capita basis, their region would get between 5 percent and 10 percent of all state expenditures. Such an injection of public funds would be worth more than the entire farm production in this predominantly agricultural region! The CELIB's reporter thought it more judicious to start out with 1-2 percent.[53] Awed by the scope of the Constantine Plan, he concluded, "Nous n'en demandons pas tant, mais on reste rêveur devant l'importance du budget civil consacré à l'Algérie."[54]

Other French politicians were even more audacious. In the Senate, the Centre Républicain d'Action Rurale et Sociale (CRARS) demanded the total harmonization of "la législation applicable aux départements français métropolitains et extramétropolitains, sous-équipés et sous-développés." The Senators argued that underdeveloped provincials had the same basic problems as underdeveloped Africans, and therefore deserved like treatment. This comparison served a specific goal. The 1955 legislation on regional development in the provinces had reserved the most generous government measures for two kinds of problem areas: industrial basins with immediate unemployment and "insufficiently developed" areas of rural France. In practice, however, Paris mainly

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[51] Auboyneau, "Problèmes de développement régional" (1960) p. 12, in CAEF 2 A 2403, and Le Bihan, "Attribution prioritaire de marchés d'État aux entreprises bretonnes" (October 1961), in CAEF B/16350; Ibid., 239.

[52] The Bretons also evoked Algerian precedents to request expanded subsidies for industrialization, a public investment bank to fund regional development, and the state exoneration of "charges sociales" for Breton industries. Le Bihan, "Attribution prioritaire de marchés d'État aux entreprises bretonnes" (October 1961), in CAEF B 16350; round table on Breton immigration, *La Croix* 4/29/1961. A Finance Inspector also recommended imitating the Algerian investment fund for metropolitan regional development in order to centralize all industrial investment funds around a single authority and a regional development plan. Auboyneau, "Problèmes de développement régional" (1960) p. 12, in CAEF 2A/2403.

[53] Le Bihan, "Attribution prioritaire de marchés d'État aux entreprises bretonnes," October 1961, CAEF B16350.

[54] The government had promised Brittany 10,000 new industrial jobs per year, one-fifth as many as the Constantine Plan envisioned for Algeria, but "L'envergure des mesures prises [en Algérie]...n'est pas comparable à celles qu'on a destinées au problème de la Bretagne." The CELB was asking for the state to cough up 40 million NFs per year for direct aid to industry. By contrast, it calculated that Paris had given Algeria 400 million NFs for the same kind of investments in the previous six years—three of which predated the Constantine Plan. G. Poulin, Groupe de travail Industrie de la CREE du CELIB, "Les Aspects financiers du problème industriel breton," December 1961, 5, 24, ADIV 1076W/56.

doled out subsidies to the industrial basins. The government argued that the much broader problem of rural underdevelopment would have to be solved by less costly means. But in direct contradiction to this stance, the Senators noted, in Algeria the administration was rolling out generous industrial subsidies to solve "précisément les problèmes de fixation de main-d'œuvre et d'élévation du niveau des revenus" that existed in rural France. Here the CRARS used Gravier's image of a "French desert" that the state needed to reclaim. France's heavily depopulated department of Ardèche was more of a human "desert" than Tizi Ouzou, it argued. "Il est donc naturel de demander l'harmonisation des législations...afin de donner à ces régions sous-développées [métropolitaines] la possibilité de retrouver l'équilibre économique actuellement offert aux départements du Sahara ou de l'Algérie."[55]

None of these measures were applied in mainland France. However, French politicians did implement one lesson that they had learned from their overseas colleagues, this time about parliamentary control over state spending. In 1958, the representatives of France's former colonies had been regrouped in a short-lived structure known as the Community, which government officials hoped would evolve in the direction of the British Commonwealth. In 1960, the Community forced Paris to produce a territorialized budget so that they could control where French development aid was being used. France's metropolitan Senate seized upon the idea. In 1962, Parliament passed a law requiring the government to submit a report every year showing where, geographically, the state had spent its civil investment credits. This "regionalization of the budget" outlived the Community to become a durable element of France's modernization policy and budget debates.[56]

The fact that provincial politicians could demand Algeria's development regime showed just how much the imperial relationship had changed since 1945. Usually it was Africans who demanded that the social and economic benefits of metropolitan France be

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[55] Senate, Proposition de loi no. 152, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 26 avril 1960, consulted in ADIV 99W/270. The man that Prime Minister Debré appointed to oversee the increase in industrial subsidies also recognized the inequalities that were fueling provincial claims-making: the administration had stuck "underdeveloped" France with a weak set of industrial subsidies while quickly increasing subsidy rates in areas of localized industrial unemployment and in Algeria. Halff to Prime Minister, 28 July 1959, CAEF B/16128.

[56] See the report of the Commission des affaires économiques presented by Étienne Dailly, document # 238, 26 June 1962, 38; Y. Prats, "La régionalisation du budget," *Revue de science financière* 6 (1967).

extended to overseas territories (although some colonial subjects rejected such reforms in the name of autonomy and independence). However, by 1960 development aid was one realm where provincial Frenchmen could demand equalization in the opposite direction. This discourse of equality cloaked a certain competition between metropolitan and overseas territories for state funding. The urgency of provincial development provided a perfect argument for "Cartierism"—the growing sense that the sums France was investing overseas would be better spent on modernization programs back home. Raymond Cartier, the idea's namesake, argued for privileging "la Corrèze avant le Zambèze."[57]

However, it seems that like other government officials and business leaders in France, regional modernizers hesitated to translate this argument into an outright call for reducing spending overseas before decolonization was already a done deal. That was the case of the Senators of the CRARS. Their 1960 demand for the equalization of development aid seemed like a perfect segue into a Cartierist stance:

> il semble également nécessaire de rappeler que, dans le passé, notre Pays a consacré hors de la métropole une part non négligeable de ses revenus à d'importants travaux d'équipement...Après ces amputations successives du patrimoine français, nous estimons qu'il serait regrettable de ne pas tenir compte de ces faits, en continuant à donner en matière d'équipement les avantages les plus importants à des régions extramétropolitaines qui, de surcroît, ne pourront définir leur destin politique que dans plusieurs années.

Nonetheless, the Senators rejected the idea of reducing programs in Africa. It was normal that, "durant ces années d'incertitudes, la France cherche par un effort financier exceptionnel à s'attacher les populations qui seront amenées à faire un choix décisif." The CRARS simply turned overseas generosity into an argument for equal spending back home.[58] Rather than generating outright competition, the

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[57] On Cartierism, see Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats," 77-78; Jacques Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français: Histoire d'un divorce* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2005 [1984]), 19-20, 487-498. In his 2005 edition, Marseille revised his 1984 thesis to stress that even pragmatic politicians and businessmen who recognized the cost of empire by the mid-1950s often viewed empire and then a privileged relationship with former colonies as necessary to France's economic might and/or remained discreet about their conviction that empire cost more than it was worth (579-608).

[58] Senate, Proposition de loi no. 152, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 26 avril 1960, consulted in ADIV 99W/270. Other politicians took similarly ambivalent stances. An emblematic figure of *aménagement du territoire*, Eugène Claudius-Petit, privately complained in a 1956 letter to the Breton politician René Pleven, "Qui annonce l'austérité inévitable qu'entraînera le maintien de l'Afrique dans la

interaction between provinces and colonies fueled the takeoff of development spending.

Politicians and boosters had no monopoly on using colonial parallels to demand equal economic rights. Small farmers also looked to Algeria. In the spring of 1961, 4,000 farmers participated in the invasion of the sub-prefecture at Morlaix, Brittany. The episode set off a peasant "revolt" that spread to several other rural regions and became a founding myth for a generation of farmers' struggles. The movement made headlines for its violent methods, which its young leaders had modeled on the guerilla actions of the Algerian FLN. The farmers burned ballot boxes, cut down telephone lines, and barricaded roads and railroads. Some even spoke of "going underground" (*prendre le maquis*).[59] The Breton farmers drew a parallel to Algeria not only in terms of insurrection, but also in terms of development. They argued that their situation paralleled those of Muslim farmers: a chronic regional poverty that their own efforts at farm modernization had not been able to overcome. They declared that rural Frenchmen had the same right to economic opportunities that the government was implementing in Africa.[60] Since the war, no government had developed a serious program for

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communauté française? Plus de 20 000 communes en Métropole n'ont ni eau ni égouts, et nous en sommes à ne pouvoir construire que de plus en plus pauvrement, et nous avons la prétention de construire en quelques années tout ce dont les Africains auront besoin!" However, the very next year he was in the running to be chosen as the director of the new OCRS, a government agency launched to develop the French Sahara, and was just as impatient to see more French modernization aid to Africa: "Je crains que l'Afrique tout entière ne soit perdue par manque d'audace et d'imagination, par peur du fédéralisme, par soumission au nationalisme et aux formules tabou de nos Pères! Sans doute ma nomination au Sahara ne changerait-elle pas tout ça. Mais ce serait peut-être l'occasion d'essayer de faire quelque chose d'utile." (These quotes were kindly communicated to me by Claudius-Petit's biographer, Benoît Pouvreau. Due to the reclassification of the archives that Claudius-Petit left to the National Archives, I have not searched for the originals. They are dated respectively 6 June 1956 and 12 March 1957.) For Pleven's own ambivalent Cartierism, see Pleven, *Avenir de la Bretagne*, 256.

[59] The regionalist group CELIB took advantage of the situation to push a region-wide set of demands. Joseph Martray, *Vingt ans qui transformèrent la Bretagne: L'épopée du CELIB* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1983), 125-136.

[60] The Brittany movement of 1961 was the largest agricultural protest movement in the Fifth Republic. Nathalie Duclos, *Les Violences paysannes sous la Vème République* (Paris: Economica, 1998), 10, 100-104. The farmers were not alone in seeing similarities between their problems and the plight of rural Algeria. The Direction d'Agriculture of the Gouvernement Général d'Algérie had specifically requested that the metropolitan supervisors for rural development projects be recruited among farmers from poor areas of metropolitan France. Farmers from the north of France, "où existe déjà une agriculture très évoluée," might have trouble fitting in. By contrast, farmers from France's "régions sous-développées" already had "des problèmes analogues" to those they would find in Algeria. CAOM GGA 14 CAB 2.

modernizing France's small farms.[61] Now the Bretons warned, "we peasants put [De Gaulle] in, and if he doesn't do something for us as well as for the Algerians and the Blacks, we'll see him out."[62]

The Breton farmers' references to Algeria were based on personal experience. As a contemporary political scientist summarized the events:

> For the most part, these young farmers were coming back from their military service in Algeria, where they had learned that violence and "subversion" were justified in dramatic situations...More generally, the Algerian War had made them painfully aware of the magnitude of the problems that economic development poses in an essentially rural country...For two and a half years, they were plunged in a drama of international scope but which, all things considered, seemed to have many similarities with the drama [playing out] in their own region and families....That's how one fine day, the French peasant realized that he was underdeveloped.[63]

Such direct parallels to overseas situations gave a remarkably concrete meaning to the commonplace idea that the French countryside was undergoing a process of "decolonization." As the government's *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* explained in 1962, "On assiste, dans les régions rurales, à un véritable phénomène de décolonisation. L'agriculteur veut cesser d'être un citoyen de second ordre. Il veut, comme les autres citoyens, bénéficier des mêmes avantages...[et] faire respecter sa dignité. Il faut réintégrer l'économie agricole dans l'économie générale et le paysan dans la nation."[64]

The 1961 peasant revolt underscored that such equalizing rhetoric was rooted in the concrete realities of the changing colonial situation. As Paris finally accepted to break down old imperial divisions of labor, launching an unprecedented campaign to rapidly improve economies and living standards overseas, colonial experiences came to shape a broad range of claims for economic equality in the metropole—from conservative boosters to spontaneous social movements. Events in Africa also informed a group of actors who had an ambiguous relationship to these bottom-up demands for reform: the

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[61] Robert Gildea, *France since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 104; Hubert Bonin, *Histoire économique de la IVe République* (Paris: Économica, 1987), 326-328.
[62] *The Times*, "Brittany fights for its future," 30 June 61. See also *Le Figaro* 20 June 1961.
[63] Yves Tavernier and Henri Mendras, "Les manifestations de juin 1961," *Revue française de science politique* 12 (1962): 667.
[64] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. I-44.

central bureaucrats who designed an unprecedented *dirigisme* of the new regional development policies of the late Fourth and early Fifth Republics.

An Inspiration for Dirigiste *Development*

Bureaucrats, engineers, and government officials returning from Overseas France in the late 1950s and early 1960s played a major role—both statistically and conceptually—in the regional development agencies and missions that rapidly multiplied in the same years. The historical convergence was evident: the end of the nation's civilizing mission overseas coincided with the invention of a new one back home. Provincial modernization therefore became one of the realms in which decolonization helped renew the sociological makeup of the administration, which in turn helped alter ingrained assumptions about the state's role in social and economic transformation.

The Senator and former prefect Edgar Pisani announced the new missionary spirit in a canonical 1956 article. Claiming that a different kind of civil service was needed to modernize the nation, Pisani called for the advent of an *administration de mission*. A "mission administration" would differ from the existing bureaucracy in its goal, spirit, and setup. Government would no longer be limited to its traditional role of supervising society and its new postwar task of "indicative" economic planning. Instead, it would now use regional and local development programs to directly orchestrate economic growth and alter citizens' everyday lives.[65] Pisani's notion of state "missionaries" explicitly harkened back to their religious and military predecessors, but he also intended to bring the spirit of private enterprise into the state.[66]

This modernizing mission justified a new administrative setup, which combined the centralization of oversight and the circumvention of traditional political representation. The state's disorderly accumulation of new development responsibilities

[65] As sociologist Pierre Grémion put it, the mission administration would "faire de l'État non plus seulement un régulateur des rapports civils mais un agent de développement économique et social." Pierre Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique: Bureaucrates et notables dans le système politique français* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 352.

[66] Pisani cited the institutional reforms in the French army and the Church as direct parallels for his state plans: "Il suffirait...de substituer les termes laïques aux termes sacrés utilisés." Edgard Pisani, "Administration de gestion, administration de mission," *Revue française de science politique* (April-June, 1956): 318. As for the spirit of private business, it was in part an American import. Pisani cited an administrator of the TVA as recommending the "procédés de la corporation publique, une corporation investie des pouvoirs de gouverner, mais possédant la flexibilité et les possibilités d'initiative des entreprises privées." Pisani, "Administration de gestion, administration de mission," 319.

in the 1950s cried out for rationalization. But in the eyes of Pisani and other reformers, the French bureaucracy and traditional politicians, or *notables*, were inherently resistant to change and cooperation. Government modernizers therefore placed their hopes in the creation of new nodes of decision-making outside the existing bureaucracy: mission administrations would cut across ministerial hierarchies and political assemblies to get projects implemented. In addition, Pisani wrote that a mission administration needed to be "directement dépendante du gouvernement de qui lui viennent des moyens et une autorité exorbitante du droit commun."[67] The former prefect idolized the powerful "intendants" of the *ancien régime*, who acted at the will of the king. The *missi dominici* of the postwar state should likewise answer directly to the prime minister, which would allow them to choose their partners—rather than having to answer to the usual set of ministerial officials and elected representatives.

Such ad hoc development authorities had already been created in other countries. Pisani cited the Tennessee Valley Authority, the High Commissariat for Sardinia, and the British new town development corporations. The difference in France was the ambition of the new paradigm. For government reformers, the notion of the mission administration did not just describe a few new agencies. It was meant to guide a general overhaul of the Republican state.[68] France's empire played a considerable role in that project. The multiplication of overseas development programs taught thousands of officials to think of themselves as modernizing missionaries and to experiment with some of the reforms later implemented in France. And as decolonization allowed their development efforts to be refocused on the Hexagon, Gaullist governments finally generalized a state reform that had been limited to ad hoc experiments under the Fourth Republic.

Brittany's peasant *jacquerie* of 1961 is a good case in point. In response to the unrest, Paris issued a number of projects for rural development. At the same time, the Interior Ministry changed the prefectoral administrations in the departments of Morbihan and Finistère, the epicenter of the revolt. All of the new prefectoral officials were

[67] Pisani, "Administration de gestion, administration de mission," 317, 325.
[68] Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique*, 348-358.

returning from Overseas France.[69] A former Algerian administrator, who had spent his career governing Saharan nomads, was even sent to live permanently in the isolated canton of Mauron. There he would administer an experimental project of comprehensive rural development, known as a *secteur pilote d'aménagement rural* (SPAR). The setup resembled the relationship between the colonial administrator and "his" natives in the "bush," as the official paternalistically attended to the needs of isolated residents who got by on a quasi-subsistence economy. The average Mauron farm was just 8-10 acres (3-4 hectares), divided into tiny parcels that were often too small for animal-drawn machines, let alone tractors. Residents suffered from malnutrition, insalubrious housing, and low education rates.[70]

This episode speaks volumes about the extent to which decolonization could permeate the modernization of rural France. Officials returning from North Africa were sent to calm down French peasants who claimed an affiliation with Algerian Muslims. It also reveals the divergent lessons that could be taken out of overseas modernization programs. During the 1961 revolt, Breton farmers claimed a right to economic development and forged a sense of taking control of the modernization process. By contrast, the new prefect of Morbihan, J. P. Roy, complained that rural Bretons suffered from an "isolement prolongé, hors des grands axes de développement du progrès...qui, avec le temps, devait affecter les habitants eux-mêmes dont la passivité ou la résignation émoussait le sens de l'effort individuel." This stigmatization of Breton backwardness was matched by Roy's belief in state-led modernization, which echoed his previous civilizing mission as prefect of the Algerian department of Saoura. In a public conference on the SPAR project, Roy congratulated the colonial administrator living in Mauron for having managed to "susciter le désir" for progress among "une masse surtout individualiste et souvent résignée."[71]

The twenty other SPAR projects spread across France were also heavily staffed by returning colonial agents, who kept each other appraised of their findings. The

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[69] Officials at the Interior Ministry may have thought that these former colonial officials would be particularly capable of controlling an unruly population, but such concentrations of administrators were not unusual in 1960s France. In 1962, quite similar prefectoral setups could be found in neighboring Finistère and La Manche, for example. Various factors, including personal networks, could converge to create such "colonial" teams of officials.

[70] On Mauron, see the Archives départementales du Morbihan 955W/26, 47, 100; and 943W/518-519.

[71] Roy had spent four years as prefect in Algeria.

administrator running the project in the Dordogne prefecture used a lengthy comparison between provincial peasants and "les ex-colonisés d'Algérie" to tell ministry officials in Paris that France's "arrondissements ruraux inadaptés" needed their own Constantine Plan. By that he meant exceptional development aid: "La mise en oeuvre...de moyens financiers massifs appliquées sur une période courte pour rattraper le retard." But unlike regionalists, who likewise demanded a Constantine Plan for the provinces, this prefectoral official also wanted to import the Algerian administrative model. Prefects should have exceptional power over farmers' unions and local authorities. That would allow them to "faire passer les objectifs du Gouvernement dans l'esprit des Paysans" and to achieve an "autoritaire" fusion of rural communes, which were too small to fund viable development projects.[72]

Such a dense network of former colonial officials was exceptional. Nonetheless, overseas experiences were remarkably common in the French administration in the 1960s. Some 30 percent of French *hauts fonctionnaires* had served in Overseas France.[73] The proportion could be even higher in specific services working on regional development.[74] Again, take the case of the Interior Ministry and its prefectoral corps. Among prefects in service in 1973, 34 percent had served in Algeria and 16 percent in other French colonies. The rate was undoubtedly higher among sub-prefects.[75]

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[72] A former colonial administrator turned prefect likewise told Véronique Dimier, "We were used to dealing with peasants. Whatever his colour, a peasant is the same in Africa or in France." Véronique Dimier, "For a New Start: Resettling French Colonial Administrators in the Prefectoral Corps," *Itinerario* 28 (2004): 59.

[73] Catherine Grémion, *Profession, décideurs: Pouvoir des hauts fonctionnaires et réforme de l'État* (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1979), 391. The most spectacular example was the new Ministry of Cultural Affairs. Here former colonial administrators did much of the work figuring out how to spread Parisian culture to the provinces. That oddly resembled their overseas civilizing mission and, incidentally, helped economic decentralization by spreading the kind of high-brow cultural amenities that attracted Parisian managers and engineers. Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home*, 58-82; Marie-Ange Rauch, *Le Bonheur d'entreprendre: les administrateurs de la France d'outre-mer et la création du Ministère des affaires culturelles* (Paris: Comité d'histoire du Ministère de la culture, 1998).

[74] A rare early reflection on the impact of colonial experiences on the 1960s generation of French planners, engineers, and social scientists came from Michel Marié, a sociologist engaged in *aménagement du territoire* who worked with planners and engineers in both colonial North Africa and metropolitan France. He chides fellow planners for their collective memory loss of these formative colonial years. Marié, *Les Terres et les mots*, 29-57; Michel Marié, "Réseaux techniques, territoires et colonisation," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* (1996).

[75] Sylvain Laurens, "La noblesse d'État à l'épreuve de 'l'Algérie' et de l'après 1962. Contribution à l'histoire d'une 'cohorte algérienne' sans communauté de destins," *Revue des sciences sociales du politique* 76 (2006): 82. On the integration of colonial administrators graduated from the ENFOM who integrated the prefectoral administration, see Dimier, "De la décolonisation... à la décentralisation." For many of them,

Moreover, officials returning from overseas were disproportionately represented in regional development missions, which prefectures were rapidly creating in a bid to take back control of provincial modernization.[76] This trend was even more pronounced in the ministry's Parisian services that dealt with urbanism and economic development. By the early 1960s, returning colonial administrators "avaient à peu près 'colonisé'" these services, half of which they took over entirely.[77] Similar trends can be found among the elite engineers in the *corps des Ponts et Chaussées*. Nearly two hundred of them came home from overseas service at the turn of the 1960s. Back in metropolitan France, these "colonial" engineers were at the forefront of the corps' shift to urban, regional, and economic planning tasks.[78]

Last but not least, at the upper ranks of the administration, some of the most emblematic practitioners of *aménagement du territoire* and the "mission administration" were returning from overseas. That was the case for Paul Delouvrier. In 1961, Delouvrier became the new Haussman of the Paris region, overseeing the creation of the District de la Région de Paris. His previous job had been as the top official in Algeria

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being a prefect was what most resembled the work of a colonial administrator, but they had the sense of being "[d]es préfets pas comme les autres"(219).

[76] These missions were being launched during the decolonization years and were considered less prestigious than traditional assignments. Based on my own study of regional prefectures' planning teams, or "missions," and of development jobs in departmental prefectures (such as the *sous-préfets chargés des affaires économiques* or the *sous-préfets chargés du chef lieu* named to aid in the development of the department's capital city). I used the *Bottin administrative*; René Bargeton, *Dictionnaire biographique des préfets, septembre 1870-mai 1982* (Paris: Archives nationales, 1994); *Dictionnaire biographique des anciens élèves de l'École nationale de la France d'outre-mer*, (Paris: Association des anciens élèves de l'École nationale de la France d'outre-mer, 2003). Extra comma.

[77] In the words of one of these former colonial administrators, Jean Clauzel, *La France d'outre-mer, 1930-1960: Témoignages d'administrateurs et de magistrats* (Paris: Éd. Karthala, 2003), 758. These services were located in the ministry's Direction générale des collectivités locales. At the height of their presence, the "colos" constituted an overwhelming majority in the "services de l'action économique" and "services de l'équipement," the two key divisions of the DGCL for development and urbanism. They fully ran three of the six subdivisions in this domain: the *études générales de l'équipement*, the *études générales d'urbanisme*, and a section called *sociétés, établissements, services économiques* whose jobs dealt with such things as the new towns or an experimental form of rural *commune* designed around a total planning of the rural economy.

[78] Between 1957 and 1976, six of eight presidents of the Ponts et Chaussée's powerful alumni association, which pushed the shift to an engagement in urban and regional planning, had served overseas. Jean-Charles Fredenucci, "L'outre-mer comme prisme des transformations du métier d'ingénieur des ponts et chaussées et des pratiques de l'urbanisme au cours des années soixante (1958-1975)," *Pour mémoire: Revue du Comité d'histoire du Ministère de l'Equipement* 2 (avril, 2007): 70, 74, 76; Jean-Charles Fredenucci, "L'entregent colonial des ingénieurs des Ponts et Chaussées dans l'urbanisme, 1950-70," *Vingtième Siècle*: 82-85, 90-91.

(the Délégué général du gouvernement), where he had overseen the Constantine Plan.[79] Delouvrier's homologue for the provinces was also returning from North Africa. In 1963, the government created the ultimate mission administration to coordinate regional development, the DATAR (Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale). Its leadership fell to Olivier Guichard, who had previously been in charge of developing the oil-rich expanses of the French Sahara as head of the Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes (OCRS). Both Delouvrier and Guichard brought collaborators back from Africa in their coattails.[80]

Finally, the reform that generalized the mission administration across the French state was also influenced by decolonization. In 1964, the government created a strong regional prefect aided by a planning "mission" in each French region. Studying the closed-door government negotiations that resulted in the 1964 decrees, the sociologist Catherine Grémion showed that many of the men who supported it had recently returned from the colonies or the DOMTOM. Some had directly experienced the regionalization of the French administration in Algeria. That provided "une espèce de travaux pratiques" for metropolitan reforms, as one man put it. More broadly, the men returning from overseas service believed in the urgency of economic development and thought that it justified the same kind of "autoritarisme éclairé" they had experienced in the colonies: prefects and state development agencies would centralize power to direct

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[79] Lemoine calls the Algeria experience a "laboratoire" for Delouvrier's thinking on the political-administrative reform of the Paris region Hervé Lemoine, "Paul Delouvrier et l'Algérie: Comment servir et représenter l'État dans une guerre d'indépendance?" in *Paul Delouvrier, un grand commis de l'État*, ed. Sébastien Laurent and Jean-Eudes Roullier (Paris: Sciences Po, 2005), 71.

[80] Two of Delouvrier's associates, Michel Piquard and Jean Vaujour, were among the key artisans of the French economic vision for Algeria in the 1950s. On the District de la Région parisienne, see Lion Murard, François Fourquet, and Jean-Pierre Duport, *La Naissance des villes nouvelles, anatomie d'une décision (1961-1969)* (Paris: Presses de l'École nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, 2004), 66-70; Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 367; Laurent Zylberberg, "De la région de Paris à l'Ile-de-France: Construction d'un espace politique" (doctoral thesis, IEP de Paris, 1992), 103, 112. On the DATAR, Jean-Charles Fredenucci suggested that more than half of the Organisations d'Étude d'Aménagement des aires Métropolitaines (OREAM), created by DATAR around major urban centers, were led by people coming back from colonies (personal interview). Also on the DATAR, see Gilles Massardier, *Expertise et aménagement du territoire: L'état savant* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996), 130; Grémion, *Profession, décideurs*, 146. Before the DATAR, the government briefly tried to create a *Ministère délégué à l'aménagement du territoire* in the spring of 1962. The new minister, Maurice Schulman, chose as his right-hand man Robert Morin; Morin was also coming back from Algeria, where he had been Delouvrier's successor and France's last *Délégué général en Algérie*. Philippe Lamour, *Le Cadran solaire* (Paris: France Loisirs, 1980), 384.

modernization.[81] Grémion even wondered if the regional reform was "la transposition en France des méthodes de l'administration coloniale."[82] In the end, she concluded that overseas service converged with other factors that fostered a generation of elite civil servants committed to state-led modernization—such as the elite training school ENA, the politicization of these *hauts fonctionnaires* via their service in ministerial cabinets and political clubs, and their growing tendency to work abroad in other Western countries.[83]

At the same time, however, this colonial influence was silenced. Grémion noted that government documents made no references to overseas experiences. And the officials who told her about the imperial precedents had not discussed the issue with their colleagues, even behind closed doors. Only Grémion's interviews retrospectively pieced together this aspect of the reform.[84] As the nation turned its back on its imperial past, Overseas France—even in its reformed postwar version—was illegitimate as a reference for metropolitan government. As a result, the importance of colonial development on the contemporary French state has been largely underappreciated until recent years.[85]

2. Internal Colonialism: the Case of the *Sociétés d'aménagement régional* (SAR)

At the turn of the 1960s, the mission administration and the impact of real empire on *dirigiste* development were both epitomized by government programs for Languedoc

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[81] Several interviewees explicitly referenced their experiences in Algeria, Morocco, and the DOMTOM. One told her that the regional reform had "un fort parfum du souvenir de l'autonomie des vieilles colonies." Catherine Grémion, "Les Structures du système de décision de la haute administration française," (1969), 32-41; Grémion, *Profession, décideurs*, 278-282, 287-288, 298, 309-310. Algerian regionalization reforms were ahead of the game on many reforms back home. Jean Vergeot, the head of regional planning at the CGP, praised the Algerian regionalization during a visit to the Conseil Supérieur du Plan d'Algérie in 1959: "J'ai en effet remarqué que cet aspect régional vous préoccupait beaucoup, et j'ai constaté, avec une certaine jalousie, que vous étiez en avance sur nos propres méthodes. Ce quadrillage de vos commissions départementales pourrait être copié en Métropole." See also Claude Collot, "Tradition et innovation dans l'administration francaise: l'expérience algérienne de 1955 à 1962," *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 52 (1974).

[82] Grémion, *Profession, décideurs*, 288.

[83] Overseas service especially marked the generation of modernizers who entered the civil service in the first decade after the war. Their elders largely clung to traditional conceptions of the administration; younger *hauts fonctionnaires*, who were trained at the ENA after the early 1950s, took the need for state-led modernization and regionalization as a given. Ibid., 262-314.

[84] Hence the paradox that the only goal "qui ait finalement été opposé aux résistances des organisations...est celui, implicite—et ignoré de la plupart des acteurs—de promouvoir un style de gouvernement appliqué dans les colonies." Grémion, "Les Structures du système de décision de la haute administration française," 32-33, 53.

[85] On the silencing and forgetting of empire's influence on French institutions, see Herrick Chapman, "The Algerian War as a Moment in the History of French State-Making," conference presentation, 2010; Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, 3, 11.

and Corsica. In 1955 and 1957, these rural Mediterranean regions received France's first two "regional planning companies" (*sociétés d'aménagement régional*). The SARs belonged to the new brand of mixed-economy companies. They received state funding to undertake the "integral" modernization of rural regions; in all, seven were created. The programs of Languedoc's CNARBRL (Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région du Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc) and Corsica's SOMIVAC (Société d'aménagement pour la mise en valeur de la Corse) both centered on creating vast irrigation systems. Languedoc's in particular was among the biggest in Europe.[86] The agencies went far beyond irrigation, however. Their new infrastructures were meant to be the catalyst for a holistic transformation of agricultural economies, land use and residency, social makeup, and rural psychology. This project of using spatial restructuring to revolutionize a traditional population made the SARs the crowning achievement of *aménagement du territoire* during the Fourth Republic.[87]

An Ideal of Totalizing Transformations

The main proponent of the SARs and the president of the Languedoc company, Philippe Lamour, was a renowned interwar *planiste* with an ambitious belief in state-led modernization. After having picked up farming during the German occupation, Lamour became enamored with big agricultural schemes during a 1946 visit to the Tennessee Valley Authority and a 1952 trip to irrigated citrus orchards in California.[88] Like others of his generation, Lamour increasingly complemented this fascination for American modernity with trips to the poorer reaches of the globe. Before he had made much progress in Languedoc, Lamour was billing himself as an international development

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[86] Marie-Françoise Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région du Bas-Rhône-Languedoc* (Paris: Editions Cujas, 1968), 25. For a short overview of the SARs, see John N. Tuppen, *The Economic Geography of France* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 73-78. On the SOMIVAC, see: Raymond Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC et développement économique de la Corse: L'apport d'une société d'équipement à l'essor d'une région* (Bastia: SOMIVAC, 1982). In Corsica, tourism was farmed out to a sister organization, the Société pour l'Equipement Touristique de la Corse (SETCO).

[87] Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 9, 33-36. Pisani himself took the CNARBRL as evidence of a possible renewal of the French administration, Pisani, "Administration de gestion, administration de mission," 323.

[88] Lawyer by profession and interwar *planiste*, Lamour fled to the south and converted to agriculture during the German occupation during World War II. He became a prominent agricultural unionist (secretary general of the CGA until its 1953); it was in that role that he first began a close relationship with the CGP, in 1946. Jean-Robert Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), 153 on his visit to the TVA.

expert. He founded the "Comité européen des régions sous-développées" (CUDA), presided over a similar committee at the OECE, and spread expertise in places like southern Italy and Sardinia, Greece, and Africa.[89]

By 1956, Lamour published these international organizations' initial findings. He wrote that underdevelopment had first been identified in the world's poorest countries but, "sans revêtir un caractère aussi aigu, des problèmes de même nature, sinon de même ampleur, se posent dans certaines régions des pays européens."[90] In countries like France and Italy, a dualist economy had emerged, in which

> des effets cumulatifs...tendent à accroître encore l'écart existant entre l'évolution des deux secteurs. Le développement économique entraîne le développement de l'esprit de productivité et l'amélioration croissante des conditions de la production, tandis que le retard du développement économique, en entretenant la routine dans les techniques et dans les méthodes, contribue à écarter des esprits chaque jour un peu plus la notion et même le souci de la productivité.[91]

As such, modernization was urgent not only because of current levels of poverty or low productivity, but also due to the risk that, left alone, underdevelopment could spiral out of control. The immediate situation in Languedoc was not nearly as bad as in southern Italy or France's colonies, where Lamour hoped to launch new irrigated perimeters. However, "l'exemple italien est précisément là pour montrer l'urgence d'intervenir si on veut éviter d'avoir à faire face, dans un bref délai, à une situation aussi difficile et onéreuse."[92]

Finally, Lamour concluded from his international comparisons that during the "période transitoire" from backwardness to modernity, a strong regional authority needed to coordinate a comprehensive program of social and economic engineering.[93] Too many

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[89] Lamour was president of the "Comité consultatif sur les régions sous-développées" in the Organisation Européenne de Coopération Economique (OECE/ OEDE), and responsible for the OECE missions in Sardinia and Greece; FAO delegate to underdeveloped nations (his first trips being in Kenya 1955, Algeria 1956, Madagascar 1962). The OECE even built a center for the training of development "cadres" in Nîmes in 1960 (Rapport d'activité de la CNARBRL, Archives départementales de l'Hérault, 1180W/B18). A special body representing all of the French *sociétés d'aménagement régional* (the GERSAR), was launched by a former Moroccan engineer mainly to do development work overseas. Ibid., 248-254; Lamour, *Le Cadran solaire*, 355-361.

[90] Philippe Lamour, "Les plans d'aménagements régionaux en Italie et en France," *Politique étrangère* 21 (1956): 61. Or as Lamour wrote to Étienne Hirsch, the head of the CGP, the problems of France's lagging provinces resembled "the stagnation and retardation observed in certain Oriental countries." Lamour letter to Hirsch, October 1956, CHAN 80AJ/28.

[91] Ibid.: 62.

[92] Ibid.: 81.

[93] Ibid.: 62; Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 32-33.

development programs only provided infrastructure, Lamour complained. Modernization had to be a coordinated package of transformations. Otherwise, in the most underdeveloped areas, "notamment dans certaines régions méditerranéennes et africaines, on risquerait de voir un jour d'orgueilleux et onéreux monuments de ciment abandonnés au milieu du désert économique et de la misère sociale."[94] The CNARBRL therefore announced a literally totalizing program: "Les aménagements régionaux doivent faire l'objet d'un plan général tenant compte de tous les éléments de la vie économique et sociale du pays sous tous ses aspects."[95] Such a comprehensive project required wealthy regions to pick up the tab for the modernization of backwards ones. Lamour admitted that this aid would have to be invested "à fonds perdus" in the short term, but promised it would pay off in the long term. Unproductive Frenchmen would not only raise their own standard of living, but also be able "de contribuer à la production générale dans des conditions qui...cessent de mettre ces régions et ces populations à la charge de la nation."[96]

At the same time as outside spending, comprehensive development legitimated external control. The backwardness of local populations justified the creation of a strong regional authority, "embedded" in the community but autonomous from its "traditional" circuits of power. Lamour's argument was validated by other government officials. As opposition grew to the CNARBRL's projects, a parliamentary investigation was opened into accusations of the company's authoritarianism. The Finance Ministry came out in favor of the SAR. It claimed that giving a semipublic agency such a sprawling reach over the local economy was justified in underdeveloped areas, where it was necessary to overcome not just technical obstacles, but also "la force des habitudes de vie et de culture" and "les courants commerciaux traditionnels." Indeed, the ministry claimed, the choice of a "semipublic" agency was not determined by the amount of private capital involved in the project—in the case of the SARs, there was relatively little—but by "l'influence plus ou moins profonde des aménagements à réaliser sur l'économie

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[94] Robert Carbonnieres and Philippe Lamour, *La Mise en valeur intégrale dans les aménagements régionaux, l'exemple de la région du Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc* (Nîmes: Compagnie nationale d'aménagement du Bas-Rhône Languedoc, 1960), 5-7; R. Perronnet and Philippe Lamour, *La Société d'économie mixte d'aménagement régional: L'exemple de la Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région du Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc* (Montpellier: Paysan du Midi, 1962).
[95] Lamour, "Les plans d'aménagements régionaux en Italie et en France."
[96] Ibid.: 62-63.

traditionnelle de la région." In short, the very backwardness of Languedoc's farmers precluded local control over regional development.[97] In the end, the parliamentary commission simply reassured the public that the CNARBRL would make more of an effort to awaken a desire for change in this "milieu prisonnier de structures anciennes" before forging on with its projects. Participation meant a more paternalist attempt to convince and guide farmers, not the integration of their objections.[98]

Lamour correctly noted that development was a political affair. His mission was to solve the problem of Languedoc's unruly winegrowers. Wine was a veritable monoculture, counting for more than 70 percent of the area's produce, 90 percent in the department of Hérault. It was also prone to cyclical crises. The region's farmers produced too much bad wine and, when they could not market their product, they violently protested to get a government bailout.[99] More broadly, as an officially approved study of the CNARBRL explained, "Ici, la vigne est plus qu'une monoculture, c'est une civilisation. Non seulement elle a créé un genre de vie, mais aussi, elle a contribué à forger une certaine mentalité, un certain type d'homme." Namely, it had created farmers who were pleased with the relatively leisurely agriculture that small vineyards allowed—many growers lived in village centers, some even resided in cities—and who were thus unwilling to convert to new sectors. The winegrowers were supported by a range of officials who claimed that vineyards were an engrained regional tradition to protect, not a simple crop to be sacrificed to market forces.[100]

After a particularly rough downturn in wine sales, the government of Pierre Mendès France turned its "reconversion" policy on Languedoc's "civilisation de la vigne" in 1954. It offered subsidies to tear up vineyards. At the same time, it approved the CNARBRL. Irrigation would open a path to conversion by allowing the production of fruits and vegetables in the arid soil west of the Rhone River. By the same token, the regional program would also allow the reclamation of unused land and the installation of

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[97] Cited in Perronnet and Lamour, *La Société d'économie mixte*., vii-viii.
[98] CHAN F10/5839.
[99] Between Nîmes and Narbonne, 45 percent of household breadwinners grew wine. Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 20, 61; Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 157, 164.
[100] Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 20-21, 61-63, 154-. Souchon is drawing on the civilizational explanation of Languedoc's underdevelopment that Raymond Dugrand advanced in *Villes et campagnes en Bas-Languedoc: le réseau urbain du Bas-Languedoc méditerranéen* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963).

outside settlers. There was only one problem: local farmers violently resisted the idea of giving up winegrowing. Even worse, they feared that if the CNARBRL project was allowed to go forward, Paris would eventually make the destruction of the lowest-quality vineyards obligatory, forcing farmers to invest in irrigated crops. How else could such a vast program break even?[101] That set the stage for a decade of fierce conflicts. Year after year, winegrowers took to the streets and to the newspapers. In 1956, Poujadists even staged a protest that brought 10,000 of Lamour's opponents to the city of Nîmes, where the company's headquarters were located.[102]

The CNARBRL presented its endeavor as a novel experiment in cultivating local participation, but it quickly shaped up as a standoff between local farmers and outside technocrats financed from Paris. Seeing the opposition as just "la résistance instinctive à tout ce qui est nouveau et qui risque de remettre en cause le confort des habitudes routinières," Lamour decided to quickly proceed with the irrigation network that would revolutionize the regional economy.[103] Local opposition also inflated his holistic vision. The president of the CNARBRL feared that without some compulsion to change, the region's farmers would cling to their old ways. They would only slowly trade viticulture for new crops, would refuse to indebt themselves for a more speculative line of production, and would retain their village residencies instead of moving onto the farm—a prerequisite for the production of fruits and vegetables. Lamour's solution to this problem was to revolutionize land use. Instead of simply delivering water to existing farms, the CNARBRL hoped to regroup existing land parcels into modern irrigated units, complete with new farmhouses and buildings.

That was a break with the relatively liberal, "indicative" program initially submitted to the CGP in the early 1950s. The CNARBRL now took direct responsibility for buying and reworking agricultural land, building the new farms, and then reselling the properties. It also established its paternalistic oversight and its power to set the terms for farmers' integration into a speculative industry: stipulating crop orientations, hiring technical advisors to educate farmers (even making some of them live on site), and

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[101] Ibid., 168.
[102] Ibid., 167-178; Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 171-180.
[103] Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 164-165, 174, 183; Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 187-188. See also Yves Durrieu, L'Impossible *régionalisation capitaliste, témoignages de Fos et du Languedoc* (Paris: Ed. Anthropos, 1973), 91-93.

creating new cooperatives, markets, and systems for contracting out produce to processing firms. It even won government contracts to redevelop rural towns, as well as to undertake the tourist development of the Languedoc littoral.[104] Lamour justified these projects as the only way to ensure local participation in the modernization project. But for many farmers, they added up to authoritarianism.[105]

Moreover, the next two decades proved the limits of this top-down schema. The majority of winegrowers refused to convert to new crops. As protestors had argued, this resistance left the company's irrigation system wildly over-dimensioned. It turned at just 10-20 percent of its total capacity. The farmers who did invest in the company's program often found themselves indebted and forced to undertake an expensive reconversion, after apple orchards and other initial crops failed.[106] By the 1970s, the CNARBRL's triumphalist narrative of knowledgeable modernizers and ignorant locals was severely shaken. The company meant to deliver progress to southern agriculture had fallen prey not to a traditional society—"des valeurs, des principes, des méthodes de travail séculaires auxquels s'accrochaient les forces viticoles"—but rather to its own bad technology and market predictions.[107]

Corsica's SOMIVAC was heavily inspired by Lamour's precedent. However, it went even further in its vision of imposing improvement on a backward population and its grab to control the regional economy. The prefect, Marcel Turon, spoke of awakening "une population noble, ardente et pauvre dont les modes de vie archaïques n'ont été éveillées jusqu'ici par aucun des grands courants économiques" of modern Europe.[108] More than on the mainland, the company's program focused on the *mise en valeur* of supposedly virgin land. The amount of the island's territory that was cultivated had

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[104] On the range of the CNARBRL's interventions, see Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 192-193; Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*.

[105] The CNARBRL not only expropriated land, but also tried to dictate water prices, what crops to grow and how to grow them, and the conditions for farmers' contracts with big capitalist canneries, including the American giant Libby, which dominated many farmers via its contracting system. Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 169; François Pernet, *L'Implantation de la Libby en Bas Rhône-Languedoc: Exemple de quasi-intégration capitaliste en agriculture* (Paris: La Haye, Mouton & Co., 1967); Durrieu, L'Impossible *régionalisation capitaliste*, 176-180.

[106] Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 197-199.

[107] Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 187.

[108] Marcel Turon, "Insularité de la Corse," *Bulletin d'information de la SOMIVAC et de la SETCO* 28 (1964), 7.

fallen from 31 percent in 1913 to a staggering 0.7 percent in 1957—an extreme case of the "French desert."[109] The SOMIVAC set out to put tens of thousands of those acres back into use, mostly on the island's eastern plains. However, if the land there was largely uncultivated the SOMIVAC faced its own clash with the local community. Many land holdings were extremely splintered and village commons needed to be privatized. The island's itinerant shepherds occupied part of the zone and local irrigation syndicates fought the SOMIVAC's quest to control the island's water supply. Above all, few residents in this poorest of French regions could afford the company's repackaged land, farms, and services.[110] Even more than in Languedoc, the SAR's initial plan to balance the uplift of local farmers with the installation of new settlers shifted grossly to the latter goal. The state-backed company used its exorbitant powers to install well capitalized outsiders on Corsican soil. When it became clear that those outsiders would be French settlers flooding in from North Africa, the development program became a stunningly literal example of "internal colonialism."[111]

"Bringing the Empire Back Home"[112]

"On veut coloniser notre vieille terre," the detractors of the CNARBRL complained. "Après les Grecs, les Romains, les Franchimans de Simon de Monfort, ce sont les Parisiens de la Compagnie du canal."[113] Such claims seemed excessive to some, but in fact it was the promoters of the SARs who had initially presented them in the language of internal colonialism. The vast rural development schemes corresponded to what Jean-François Gravier had in mind when he called for a program of "internal colonization" in 1947. In a vision that was likely influenced by the very real empires of Overseas France and Nazi Germany, Gravier took about as literal a reading of colonialism as seems possible in a national democracy.[114] He complained that due to its

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[109] Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC*, 44-45; Janine Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle et Corse nouvelle: La géographie d'une île" (doctoral thesis, Université de Lille III, 1975), 336.
[110] Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC*, 3, 7-8.
[111] Ibid., 141-142.
[112] Lebovics, *Bringing the Empire Back Home*.
[113] Cited in Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 166.
[114] Gravier does not mention these connections directly. However, the DGEN team under Vichy—with which Gravier had close relations—had considered industrial decentralization and the subsequent assimilation of new social elements into provincial communities enough of a properly colonial problem to enlist the help of René Maunier, a prominent French theorizer of "the colonial fact." (Maunier also

low birth rates, France had abandoned large parts of its national territory. That left it with a regional problem unique in Europe, although more familiar to the American continent: internal territorial expansion. In Gravier's opinion, a *dirigiste* state needed to import labor, capital, and entrepreneurial dynamism into these under-populated reaches of the "French desert." Alongside the decentralization of industry and Parisian workers, Gravier's fantasy included the installation of hundreds of thousands of farmers from more densely populated agricultural regions. These "immigrants d'élite" would ideally come from the dynamic races of northern Europe, but they could also include the populations of western France, northern Italy, and even Kabylians from Algeria. By contrast, Gravier ruled out other European regions and "les peuples du Moyen-Orient, généralement inassimilables et voués au parasitisme." To make the program work, the state would procure for these immigrants "des terres, des emplois lucratifs, [et] des logements convenables pour [les] recevoir dignement."[115]

Gravier's goal was not only to assure territorial occupation and economic expansion, but also to provide a new aristocracy that could serve as a model for backwards locals. He lauded the example of Brazil, which was paying Dutch farmers to immigrate and live in model farms dispersed throughout the countryside. If France did the same, Gravier asserted, "nos cultivateurs du Centre et du Midi verraient chaque jour ce que d'autres peuvent faire sur les moins bonnes terres de leur région...Toute l'agriculture française pourrait être rénovée en une génération." Thanks to the natural

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happened to be a professor in the Institute of Urbanism and president of the Société du folklore français.) Having studied cases of industrial decentralization in France, Maunier concurred that, in effect, it was "un problème colonial." The arrival of newcomers entailed the confrontation of radically different milieus, and locals generally perceived outsiders as "envahisseurs." Arguing that "nous savons mieux ce qui se passe aux colonies, en cas pareil," Maunier passed through a colonial detour to convince the Dessus team of the need to carefully plan the integration and assimilation of new arrivals (René Maunier, note 65 bis, CAC 19770777/1). Nazi Germany's "Race and Territory" policy included a mix of industrial decentralization, territorial planning, and Germanic colonization of their conquered land in Central and Eastern Europe. The Nazi example was studied by the Dessus team and praised by Gravier. In fact, the German tradition shared many of Gravier's concern for social engineering—better than the British focus on unemployment. Germans used decentralization to boost demography, improve the social and racial stock by reinserting peasant blood, and occupy the Reich's colonized Eastern territories. See the 1942 note on Nazi spatial planning in CAC 19770777/1 and Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, 288-289.

[115] Ibid., 220-228. This was more than just talk: French officials made repeated plans to colonize Southern France with Algerian Muslim farmers, which apparently were never executed. As late as 1956, a project submitted to the prime minister envisioned the creation of "[des] collectivités rurales de nord-africaines, de Kabyles notamment, dans les régions de France délaissées par leur population naturelle." Daniel Lefeuvre notes the irony of this reverse colonization of unproductive land. Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie*, 111-112.

emulation of superior farmers, internal colonization would educate French peasants at less cost than sending them on "productivity missions" to the U.S. or building an expensive network of agricultural schools.[116] This vision of internal colonization—with its goals of territorial occupation, developing virgin land, and uplifting a backwards peasantry—fit perfectly with the programs for Languedoc and Corsica, which Gravier helped oversee. Indeed, the 1957 regional plan for Corsica hailed the SOMIVAC as a test case in "notre efficacité nationale en matière de 'colonisation intérieure.'"[117]

Over the next few years, the connotation of the internal colonial metaphor turned clearly pejorative, under the pressure of events overseas. At the same time, the term became indelibly stuck to the two SARs, thanks to their connections to real empire. The companies heavily recruited both their personnel and their new farmers among the French colonists fleeing North Africa. In terms of personnel, the companies hired the hydraulics engineers and administrators leaving the French protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia. Both territories gained independence at the same time the SARs were being created. That serendipitously met the metropolitan programs' need for expertise. Outside the nationalized electricity company EDF, most French experience with big hydraulic works was tied up in Africa, where several colonial administrations had launched vast irrigated perimeters since the interwar years. In Morocco alone, protectorate officials had the vast ambition of irrigating 1,000,000 hectares by the year 2000. Two decades before Lamour, they had been seduced by the "mirage" of creating a new California in Greater France.[118]

Lamour visited Morocco to meet the protectorate engineer Vincent Bauzil, "considéré, à juste titre, comme le meilleur hydraulicien européen." He brought back Bauzil's entire team.[119] Former protectorate officials counted for about half of the CNARBRL's personnel, including all of the technicians and all but a few of the top cadres. "Metropolitans" mostly took care of administrative matters, although the

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[116] Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, on the definition of internal colonization see 292-294, on the program for importing farmers, see 220-227.
[117] According to an "Avant-projet de Programme d'aménagement régional," Comité interministeriel d'orientation économique, July 1956, 7, CAC 19840335/59. On the 1957 regional plan, see Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle," 325-328.
[118] Will Davis Swearingen, *Moroccan Mirages: Agrarian Dreams and Deceptions, 1912-1986* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 59-110; Michel Maisonneuve, *La Conquête de l'eau: La Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région Bas-Rhône-Languedoc* (Marseille: Editea, 1992), 66-67.
[119] Lamour, *Le Cadran solaire*, 345.

protectorate engineers—nicknamed the "Afrika corps"—proved so contentious that they were replaced by locally recruited agents for matters involving direct exchanges with farmers.[120] The situation was similar in Corsica. The president of the SOMIVAC was himself a former *contrôleur civil* from Morocco.[121] Other colonial institutions joined the Corsica project. A private investment group, the GIPEC (Groupement d'initiatives privées pour l'expansion de la Corse), was created for development projects on the island, including taking the largest private share in the SOMIVAC. It was presided by the Director of the Banque industrielle pour l'Afrique du Nord and representatives of North African agricultural interests sat on its board.[122] Other colonial institutions that came to work in Corsica did not even bother to change their titles: the Institut Français d'Agrumiculture Coloniale, the SCET-Tunisie, and the Bureau Central d'Etudes d'Outre-Mer (which operated in Languedoc as well).

Unlike most French hydraulics experts, the colonial officials who came to work for the SARs had experience not only with delivering water, but also with the holistic social transformation that Lamour hoped to achieve in France. In Morocco, the 1930s had brought a mix of rural famine, out-migration, and nationalist politics among the native peasantry. In response, protectorate officials decided that their new irrigated acres should go not to French settlers, but to a more direct civilizing mission: getting traditional Moroccans to abandon subsistence farming for the production of fruits and vegetables for the world market. The overseas project clearly paralleled the later program in southern France. Protectorate officials created Offices de l'Irrigation, new agencies similar to the later SARs in their administrative setup. They insisted on the reworking of land tenure as the prerequisite for the reform of agriculture and mentalities. The Offices took charge of building farms and infrastructure, displacing residents, imposing crops, and organizing

[120] In fact, locals accused the entire CNARBRL project of being a government jobs program for colonial officials made redundant by decolonization. Albert Ramon, former protectorate engineer and executive at the CNARBRL, 17 May 2006; Souchon, *La Compagnie nationale*, 52-56, 179.
[121] The Director General Watin was a former *contrôleur civil* from Morocco, where he directed irrigation in the Doukala region. CAC 19840335/51, 59.
[122] The GIPEC's other board members included the directors of Les Fermes Françaises de Tunisie, the Coopérative des agrumes de Boufarik, and the Syndicat algérien des vins de qualité supérieure, as well as a big Algiers manufacturer. Front Régionaliste Corse, *Main basse sur une île*, 85-86; Francis Pomponi, "Les pieds-noirs en Corse," in *Marseille et le choc des décolonisations: Les rapatriements 1954-1964*, ed. Jean-Jacques Jordi and Émile Temime (Aix-en-Provence: Édisud, 1996), 122-123.

their marketing.[123] And if the protectorate officials had authoritarian means at their disposal, they nonetheless encountered fierce resistance that forced revisions of their projects. The land-regrouping plans of the 1930s were delayed for a decade. However, on the eve of independence, the irrigation program was well underway. The protectorate officials therefore brought home a renewed confidence in the "développement exemplaire" they had achieved overseas.[124]

Back in southern France, they maintained the idea that hydraulic development would only work with a top-down plan for social transition, which as one former colonial put it, "ne peut être que douloureuse."[125] In Morocco, the complex reworking of land and residency had been justified by the technology used for delivering water to individual farms: surface-level canals disposed in a geometric pattern. The metropolitan SARs dropped this technology for a sprinkler system (used in Provence and Italy), but they nonetheless retained the ideal of using land restructuring to revolutionize society.[126] The

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[123] As Swearingen describes it, the Beni Amir-Beni Moussa irrigated perimeter in Morocco pioneered the idea that land remembrement was "the absolute precondition of irrigation development" and that Office officials needed to take a "highly authoritarian modus operandi, involving directed plantings in the context of a mandatory crop rotation cycle." The result was "a highly organized geometric landscape, dominated by man and revivified by irrigation water provided by *grands barrages*. It was a vision of a rationalized landscape composed of the lush, rearranged, privately owned parcels of peasant small farmers...who would grow crops required by the state according to a rigid, predetermined production plan and adhering to strict rotation schedules. These settled people would be given total supervision and assistance by the government; however, they would be fully charged for water and aid to ensure the economic vitality of the development scheme." Swearingen, *Moroccan Mirages*, 120-121, see also 44-46 on the Office's administrative setup.

[124] Ibid; Pierre Préfol, *Prodige de l'irrigation au Maroc: Le développement exemplaire du Tadla, 1936-1985* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions latines, 1986). Swearingen writes of the Beni Amir-Beni Moussa irrigated perimeter: "For its admirers, the Office represented France's finest work in North Africa and constituted eloquent proof of this colonial power's tenacious and generous efforts to improve the lot of its Moroccan protégés," as well as serving as a technological marvel for visiting engineers (120). Préfol, a returning engineer certainly had this view: Préfol, *Prodige de l'irrigation au Maroc*, especially 86, 94-95.

[125] Jean Piétri was an engineer in Morocco after 1946 and then a Directeur de l'Exploitation at the CNARBRL. Jean Piétri, "La mémoire d'un hydraulicien," in *Grands appareillages hydrauliques et sociétés locales en Méditerranée*, ed. Michel Marié (Paris: Presses de l'Ecole nationale des ponts et chaussées, 1994), 88-89, 96. The anthropologist Michel Marié suggested that the colonial culture of the first SARs' personnel can be appreciated by contrast with the third company, the *Société du Canal de Provence* (SCP). Unlike the CNARBRL or the SOMIVAC, the SCP had no pretension to restructure local farms—and proved much less contentious with local residents. It also had few former colonial officials in its ranks. (Other explanations for its more conciliatory stance are the fact that, coming later, the SCP learned from the conflicts of the first two SARs, and that local actors played a bigger role in controlling the company.) Michel Marié, "Pour une anthropologie des grands ouvrages," *Annales de la recherche urbaine* 21 (January, 1984): 23-25.

[126] In Morocco, the irrigation system required regrouping farm parcels in to fit a geometric pattern. This project was a "première mondiale" of such a large-scale "agriculture géométrique" carved out of a traditional landscape. In southern France, the engineers maintained their ideal of reworking the land in part

colonial officials lost their authoritarian powers but otherwise sacrificed nothing in terms of top-down *dirigisme*. Indeed, in Corsica, some of these officials thought that their "mission pionnière" was even greater than in Morocco. As a geography thesis put it, the protectorate administrators figured they knew what they were getting into, "grâce à l'expérience de conditions comparables. Mais l'ampleur des besognes à accomplir les persuadèrent que la Corse était restée plus négligée qu'une lointaine colonie, plus longtemps privée des équipements coloniaux."[127]

If the presence of overseas officials gave the SARs an imperial tint, it was the massive arrival of colonial farmers from Morocco, Tunisia, and especially Algeria that turned the irrigated perimeters into a durable symbol of internal colonialism.[128] Both companies massively sold their new farms to these *pied noirs*.[129] The SOMIVAC did so to an extreme degree. It received 100 requests for its first 18 farms, but sold just one of them to an indigenous Corsican. Despite the local outcry that ensued, in 1965 three quarters of the new farms had gone to *rapatriés* (although a third of those could claim some Corsican ancestry).[130] For the SARs, the resettlement of returning French colonials was a godsend.[131] Many local residents could not afford the companies' modern farms and expensive water. Others simply refused to abandon their vineyards, in Languedoc, or

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because bulldozing existing farms would force hesitant farmers to switch over from traditional crops to irrigated agriculture. Swearingen, *Moroccan Mirages*; Jean-Jacques Perennès, *L' Eau et les hommes au Maghreb, contribution à une politique de l'eau en Méditerranée* (Paris: Ed. Karthala, 1993); Maisonneuve, *La Conquête de l'eau: La Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région Bas-Rhône-Languedoc*, 83-87.

[127] Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle," 329.

[128] This was part of a much vaster resettlement of *pieds noirs* in southern France and, in particular, in southern agriculture. Brun, in a wonderfully detailed study of the phenomenon, suggests that 85 percent of new farmers in the south of France in the years 1962-67 were *pieds noirs.* Françoise Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie dans l'agriculture du Midi méditerranéen: étude géographique* (Gap: Editions Ophrys, 1976), 22-24. For a shorter summary, see Valérie Esclangon-Morin, *Les Rapatriés d'Afrique du Nord de 1956 à nos jours* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), 124-126.

[129] Durrieu suggests that in Languedoc, the attribution of CNARBRL farms was split about half and half between local farmers and *pieds noirs*, Durrieu, L'Impossible *régionalisation capitaliste*, 172; Maisonneuve, *La Conquête de l'eau: La Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région Bas-Rhône-Languedoc*, 116.

[130] Xavier Crettiez, *La Question corse* (Bruxelles: Complexe, 1999), 27; Esclangon-Morin, *Les rapatriés d'Afrique du Nord*, 235. Since a substantial number of the *rapatriés* had some Corsican ancestry—albeit only distant ancestry for some—the SOMIVAC and its critics debated how to count how many of the new farms benefited Corsicans. Using company data, Lazzarotti concludes that 101 lots distributed before 1978, only 43 went to uncontested Corsicans. Some 51 went to *pieds noirs*, of whom 11 claimed Corsican origins and 8 of whom were "des apparentés Corses," with looser ties to the island. Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC*, 136-139.

[131] Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 199; Pomponi, "Les pieds-noirs en Corse;" Durrieu, L'Impossible *régionalisation capitaliste*; Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 124-125.

to move to Corsica's eastern plain, which had only recently been declared free of malaria. By contrast, the *pieds noirs* were desperate for land. They were also willing to invest their colonial capital and state resettlement subsidies, or to heavily indebt themselves, to buy the expensive farms. They were accustomed to a speculative capitalist agriculture. And they were often more amenable to irrigated fruits, which some had grown overseas—although other *pieds noirs* became notorious for building up vast new vineyards producing low-quality alcohol.[132]

As such, the *pieds noirs* responded to Gravier's goals for "internal colonialism," participating in a state project to import capital, labor, and an outside elite to develop a backwards territory.[133] By the end of the 1960s, it was a commonplace that the *pieds noirs* were spearheading modernization in the rural south. One scholar wrote that the settlers formed a veritable "growth pole," providing "un dynamisme souvent inconnu...[qui] les oppose à la viscosité de la paysannerie méridionale." In a milieu marked by its "résistance instinctive à tout ce qui est nouveau," the *pieds noirs* showed the way forward for the most dynamic and adaptable natives.[134] Contemporary observers did not miss the obvious parallels to the settlers' overseas civilizing mission. Quite to the contrary, some *pieds noirs* explicitly had the impression of reliving the experience of colonizing a "pays neuf."[135] Likewise, their proponents in the SARs actively cultivated the narrative of a vigorous, pioneering people who had proven their worth fertilizing North Africa and would do it again in southern France. That was the SOMIVAC's response to criticism about the *pieds noirs*' takeover of a program that was supposed to benefit Corsicans. The company wrote in 1962, "c'est le souci d'exemplarité et d'efficacité qui a amené la désignation des 'colons' [to receive the SOMIVAC's new farms]...ils apportent à l'île un élément dynamique indispensable et leurs exploitations

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[132] Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 342-344.
[133] As the SOMIVAC's official history of 1981 put it, before the operation started, "il manque essentiellement la main-d'œuvre, élément nécessaire à toute colonisation, mais aussi une volonté manifeste de conquête du sol ; les conditions de valorisation de la plaine ne sont donc pas présentement réunis, et courage, connaissances techniques et capitaux sont terriblement absents." Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC*, 45.
[134] Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 9, 344, 362. For a summary of their very different impacts on southern agriculture by geographic zone, see 342-346. For a contemporary revival of this myth, see Christiane Lees, "L'établissement des Pieds-Noirs dans le Midi méditerranéen français," in *Marseille et le choc des décolonisations: Les rapatriements 1954-1964*, ed. Jean-Jacques Jordi and Émile Temime (Aix-en-Provence: Édisud, 1996), 107-110.
[135] Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 243, 270.

doivent être autant de noyaux de progrès au milieu de propriétés actuellement sous-cultivés." Company leaders "[avaient] pu estimer Outre-Mer...le dynamisme efficace de ces pionniers." Without their example, Corsican farmers would have remained "réfractaires à la modernisation." On the other hand, the SOMIVAC promised that after this injection of "sang frais," more farms would be allotted to young Corsicans, whose hunger for irrigated progress had been awaken by the settlers' example.[136]

Many local farmers drew an opposite inference from the colonial precedent, complaining that the *pieds noirs* acted "comme en pays conquis."[137] The well-capitalized outsiders inflated land prices, undercut local competition, and spread their control over the regional economy. That was especially true in Corsica. The biggest units there were veritable agro-businesses, with the *colons* overseeing teams of North African immigrant workers. The island's new settlers also organized dominant institutions in everything from land sales and farm cooperatives to canneries and the wine trade.[138] Finally, the *rapatriés* posed a problem of assimilation. As they developed Corsica's previously abandoned eastern plain, the opposition with the native agriculture inland was translated into a spatial opposition between seemingly divergent societies. Some eastern towns, like Ghisonaccia, were veritable foreign colonies. Personal networks, language, and customs reinforced the sense that two different peoples were coexisting.[139]

In the end, only a fraction of *pieds noirs* farmers were installed on the SARs land; even fewer could aspire to very large affairs. Nonetheless, the development companies and their *colons* symbolized the growing sense that the south was a colonial economy. For tiny traditional farmers or young southerners struggling to enter the modern farm industry, the new settler farms embodied the profound inequality of agricultural

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[136] "Examen des critiques formulées à l'égard de l'action de la SOMIVAC," *Bulletin d'information de la SOMIVAC et de la SETCO*, 13 (1962), 7-9, and "La Corse face au problème des rapatriés," *Ibid*. 14 (1962) 1, 1. In her geography thesis, Janine Renucci summarizes this condescending logic: "la responsabilité de ce dosage déséquilibré ne provient pas d'une intention déterminée de discrimination vis-à-vis de la population; elle réside plutôt dans le fait que celle-ci n'était pas armée pour la compétition...ni par ses comportements, ni par ses connaissances techniques ni par ses disponibilités financières...Peu de demandeurs étaient d'ailleurs susceptibles de satisfaire aux qualités exigées pour que l'avenir des nouvelles exploitations soit sûr...C'était une situation vexatoire pour l'ombrageuse susceptibilité d'une partie de l'opinion insulaire." Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle," 336.
[137] Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 256-257.
[138] Ibid., 233, 251-254.
[139] In Languedoc, Costières also formed a *pied noir* "colony." Ibid., 100-103, 256-257; Lazzarotti, *SOMIVAC*, 139, 141.

modernization.[140] For the new critical regionalism, they epitomized the fact that the provinces were dominated by an alliance of the state and external capital.[141] Even the geographer Françoise Brun, in her sympathetic study of *pieds noirs* farmers, admitted, "On ne peut s'empêcher de songer à la colonisation algérienne."[142]

If these tensions gradually subsided in Languedoc, they grew explosive in Corsica. The density of *pieds noirs* on the island presented a unique case of an "Algérie nouvelle" in southern France. Some 17,000 *colons* had immigrated in less than a decade. That made the nascent "Corsica problem" broadly a *rapatriés* problem.[143] Less than a decade after its creation, the SOMIVAC and *pieds noirs* had become prime targets of the new Corsican regionalism.[144] The Action régionaliste corse (ARC) accused the invaders "de mépriser les intérêts économiques de toute une population et de la traiter comme une peuplade de sous-développés mentaux bons à coloniser." The first act of regionalist violence was a 1965 bombing of SOMIVAC buildings, accompanied by slogans of "pieds noirs leave" and "colonists leave" (*pedi neri fora* and *colons fora*).[145] Bombings of *pied noir* farms ensued.[146] The most spectacular one occurred in the town of Aléria in August 1975, which became the foundational event of a new nationalist movement. Eight armed regionalists invaded a *pied noir* vineyard accused of doping its wine with sugar. In the ensuing standoff with an armada of over 2,000 policemen and security forces, the nationalists killed two government agents and set off a night of riots. Edmond Simeoni, the commando's leader, announced that a *pied noir* farm had been chosen to symbolize "le caractère colonial de la mise en valeur de l'île."[147] The next year, the creation of the FLNC (Fronte di Liberazione Naziunale Corsu) put front and center the

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[140] Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle," 340, 372-374; Robert Ramsay, *The Corsican Time-Bomb* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 38-39.
[141] For an exposé of internal colonialism in Corsica, see Front Régionaliste Corse, *Main basse sur une île*, 19-41.
[142] Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 256.
[143] Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 26; Brun, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 241, 257; Pomponi, "Les pieds-noirs en Corse," 117-118, 120.
[144] Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 27-29, 92-99; Esclangon-Morin, *Les rapatriés d'Afrique du Nord*, 234-236.
[145] Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 28.
[146] Renucci, "Corse traditionnelle," 333.
[147]Quoted in Esclangon-Morin, *Les rapatriés d'Afrique du Nord*, 234-236. The Aléria attack followed a period of renewed tensions between the North African *rapatriés* and Corsican regionalists, with renewed attacks on the SOMIVAC and *pied noir* farms, followed by the scandal implicating *pied noir* winegrowers that set off the attack. Crettiez notes that much of the Corsican population viewed the violent assertion of native rights against the *rapatriés* as legitimate. The Aléria attack became canonized as the first act of the national liberation movement. Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 44-49, 97-99.

nationalists' references to the Algerian FLN and other national liberation movements. That simply added one more twist to the overlap between real empire and France's internal periphery.[148]

The repercussions of the regional development program decided in the 1950s continue to be felt.[149] In 1991, the *Unione di u Populu Corsu* was still hammering home the SOMIVAC's memory to the island's residents, as a foremost symbol of internal colonialism:

> Les arrivés qui débarquent des fourgons d'un colonialisme africain en débandade sont présentés comme porteurs de toute la capacité de la modernité. Ils ont le label SOMIVAC. Ils ont pour mission d'apprendre aux Corses à vivre, à travailler, à s'enrichir et même à se divertir. Ils sont les pionniers qui vont fertiliser cette vieille terre ingrate et peuplée d'habitants engourdis. Leur miracle est baptisé 'californien' alors que le Ghisunaccia [the biggest irrigated perimeter] de la SOMIVAC ressemble à la Mitidja [an Algerian vineyard region] avec ses cohortes d'ouvriers agricoles maghrébins.[150]

Two years earlier, Prime Minister Michel Rocard had likewise cited the SOMIVAC debacle in a speech apologizing for France's wrongdoings on the island—right up there with the *ancien régime* purchase of Corsica from Genoa and the regime of military government imposed by the Third Republic.[151]

Rocard was adopting the nationalists' discourse in a policy of appeasement, but he had not waited for the 1980s to denounce the errors of state-led modernization. Rocard had issued his influential call to "décoloniser la province" in 1966. For his generation of young Left leaders, the SARs' invasion of southern France was emblematic of a broader problem of capitalist development and provincial alienation. Could there have been a better illustration of Robert Lafont's claim that "Impérialisme français et

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[148] Although Crettiez notes that Corsica's FLNC never adopted the organizational structure of a national liberation movement like the Algerian FLN or the revolutionary social project often associated with Third World anti-colonial struggles. For him, Corsican nationalism is less theorized and "un modèle plus primitif, associant peuple, terre et communauté...sorte de persistance du communisme agro-pastoral primitif en Corse, nettement plus réactionnaire que révolutionnaire." Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 160-161.
[149] On the particularity of Corsica's durably violent regionalism in France, see Pierre Deyon, *Régionalismes et régions dans l'Europe des quinze* (Paris: Locales de France, 1997), 88-91.
[150] Crettiez, *La Question corse*, 27-29.
[151] The speech was part of the Socialist government's policy of appeasement with the nationalist opposition. Ibid., 212-213.

colonialisme intérieur sont non pas synchrones, ni consciemment associés, mais logiquement dépendants dans l'histoire de la nation française"?[152]

3. Decolonization and National Integration

"The famous Hexagon can itself be seen as a colonial empire shaped over the centuries," historian Eugen Weber wrote in his classic account of France's national integration, *Peasants into Frenchmen*.[153] Weber examined contemporary theories of development and analyses of the colonial situation by the likes of Marcel Mauss, Pierre Bourdieu, Abdelmalek Sayad, and Franz Fanon. He found them perfectly applicable to nineteenth-century France.[154] For the historian, this was no longer true after World War I. By then, the Hexagon was tied together in a way it had not been a century earlier—by language, culture, and history; by infrastructure, a national economy, and the press; and by a generalized sentiment of collective belonging.[155] What Weber failed to appreciate is that despite these changes, the same discourses he found in an earlier period continued to resonate in postwar France. The 1950s and 1960s revived fears that if France was a national polity, it had failed to integrate the regions morally and materially.[156]

One only has to compare Weber's examples to our own. The "two Frances" discourse invented in 1826 did not disappear with the Belle Époque, as he writes. It resurfaced and flourished.[157] So did the colonial parallels used to express that dichotomy. In support of his internal colonial thesis, Weber noted that "[i]n 1843 Adolphe Blanqui compared the people of France's Alpine provinces to those of Kabylia and the Maquesas."[158] More than a century later, an ENA student doing his *stage de dépaysement* in the rural backwaters of Tunisia could still find it "curieux de retrouver, à 2000 km de distance, la même méfiance madrée plus ou moins calmement manifestée à l'égard du nouveau venu, la même fierté chez le nomade isolé sur la hamada et chez le paysan accroché aux pentes des Monts du Jura."[159]

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[152] Lafont, *La Révolution régionaliste*, 189, cited in Mény, *Centralisation et décentralisation*, 376.
[153] Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 485, 493. For what follows, see 485-496.
[154] For a critique of Weber's use of postwar modernization theory, see Edward Berenson, "Review Article: *The Modernization of Rural France*," *The Journal of European Economic History* 8 (spring 1979).
[155] Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 486, 493-496.
[156] To paraphrase Marcel Mauss' distinction between empire and nation, Ibid., 485..
[157] Ibid., 494.
[158] Ibid., 487.
[159] Allain report, Tunisia, CAC 19790447/286.

In both centuries, modernizers spoke of *mise en valeur* as "colonization" and weighed provincial development projects against imperial improvements. Indeed, the SARs' geographic coverage echoes Weber's list of the nineteenth century's internal colonies, not least because some traced their origins to his period. Lamour's idea of irrigating Languedoc had been proposed in seven different plans between 1847 and 1902.[160] Like the capitalist engineers of the Second Empire, the presidents of the postwar SARs claimed the superiority of elite knowledge over the traditional peasant, unable to conceive of himself as "an agent of change."[161] Both centuries' modernizers deplored that backwards provincials put perfectly good farmland to unproductive uses. If rural populations could not rationally exploit local resources, outside elites would do it for them.[162] And one can only think of Corsica when reading nineteenth-century calls to divide up village commons, force shepherds to produce better sheep, and recuperate land from those "mulish communities that refuse to sell them to speculators" (Balzac in 1837).[163]

In both centuries, the parallel between provinces and colonies was not just a discourse of control by the center. Already in the 1860s, elites from Brittany and the Limousain evoked the empire to demand more government aid back home. "They are sending colonists to faraway lands to cultivate the desert, and the desert is here!" they complained. "If only they would treat us like Arabs!"[164] Jean-François Gravier and René Pleven could not have put it better themselves. Provincial residents resisted the projects of the state and outside capital. Of course, in the postwar years, fewer Frenchmen saw modernization as a dispossession of local communities by the state, as an attempt to eradicate regional cultures, or as a cause for insubordination. Nonetheless, *Peasants into Frenchmen* went to print the same year (1976) that Corsica's FLNC kicked off its violent attacks with the slogan of "French leave" (*francese fora*).

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[160] Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 154-157.
[161] Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 487-488, 495-496.
[162] The third of what were eventually seven SARs was implanted in Provence. There a 1953 state commission had decided it was necessary to "épauler les municipalités paysannes insuffisamment évoluées pour surmonter les difficultés d'une transformation profonde de leur économie traditionnelle." *Rapport général de la Commission d'aménagement de la région de la Durance*, (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1953), 9, 44.
[163] Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 488.
[164] Ibid., 489.

Weber offered a very different message than the new separatist movement. For him, French history had two lessons for contemporary observers. First, the conflicts created by the diffusion of modernization from core to periphery would eventually subside. Second, decolonization could be achieved through the further integration of a heterogeneous polity, and not only by its rupture. For centuries, Weber wrote, French peasants had resisted modernizing endeavors sent down from Paris. But by 1900,

> [n]ew ways that had once seemed objectionable were now deliberately pursued and assimilated—not by a fawning 'bourgeoisie' or self-indulgent 'intellectuals,' as in Fanon's account, but by people of all sorts who had been exposed to such ways and acquired a taste for them. Perhaps this should make us think twice about 'colonialism' in underdeveloped countries, which also reflects regional inequalities of development...[P]erhaps the unfashionable fin-de-siècle views of 'progress' deserve another look.[165]

In the era of decolonization and Third World realignment, Weber believed, French history suggested that a violent period of conquest, colonization, and resistance could give way to a more consensual process of cooperation and collective development.

At the beginning of the 1960s, most government officials and provincial boosters agreed with that sentiment. The demise of France's empire stoked fears of internal division at home, but for now the main lessons were not about cultural difference and devolution. Radical regionalists like Lafont would only gradually impose those concerns over the next two decades. At the outset of the Fifth Republic, on the contrary, officials in Paris and the provinces turned to *aménagement du territoire* as the ultimate program for national integration. Their goal was economic development. Their method was the "functional" planning of France's remaining territory. And the needs of an unprecedented planning apparatus legitimated the Gaullist government's tremendous centralization of power in Paris. During the Fourth Republic, technocrats had often been kept on the political sidelines. Now they were at the heart of government. They set out to create a new economy, a new generation of modernizing elites in the provinces, and a forward-looking public that believed, as Weber put it, that "[c]hange is always awkward, but the changes modernity brought were often emancipations."[166]

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[165] Ibid., 492.
[166] Ibid.

Both the sense of national division and the ideal of planned integration were incarnated by the government's *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* of 1962. Matignon had requested the plan from the Construction Minister, Pierre Sudreau, and his new Conseil supérieur de la Construction (CSC). Sudreau in turn tapped Philippe Lamour to oversee its elaboration.[167] The *Plan national* offered a dramatic vision of a nation torn asunder by moral and material differences. It then called for a vast state program in which spatial planning would be the framework for a totalizing modernization effort.[168]

Lamour transposed a number of principles from his Languedoc program to the national territory. One was his dualist vision of backwardness and progress. He wrote that northern Europe was moving to a new stage of development, but France's underdeveloped regions—"la plus grande partie du pays"—risked missing out on the transition to modernity. At stake was the unity of the nation. "Si un effort exceptionnel et efficace n'est pas entrepris à bref délai pour remédier à ce déséquilibre économique et démographique," the *Plan national* warned, "...la partie Nord-Est de la France sera absorbée dans une Europe dominée par l'Allemagne tandis que ses régions périphériques...s'en dissocier[ont] pour s'assimiler aux pays à l'économie déprimée de la péninsule ibérique."[169]

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[167] Lamour went on to become the longtime president of the new *Commission Nationale d'Aménagement du Territoire* in 1962. Construction Ministry official André Trintignac claimed that this was the first national spatial plan in history; even the Netherlands only had a "note" offering directives on national territorial development. André Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone: Villages, villes, régions* (Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1964), 250.

[168] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* (December 1962). An abbreviated and published version is: Philippe Lamour, *L' Aménagement du territoire: Principes, éléments directeurs, méthodes et moyens* (Paris: Editions de l'Epargne, 1962). The *Plan national* was part of a venerable French genre: government planning documents whose apocalyptic predictions justified a vast *aménagement du territoire* effort. The extreme point of this catastrophism was a 1971 planning document called the "Scénario de l'inacceptable," which predicted, in the words of François Essig, the head of the DATAR, "un accroissement spectaculaire de déséquilibres régionaux engendrant des risques de tensions, voire de conflits au sein de la société française." François Essig, *DATAR: Des régions et des hommes* (Montréal: Stanké, 1979), 45-47.

[169] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. I-2. See also Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone*, 250.

Lamour revived the nineteenth-century conception, analyzed by Eugen Weber, of France as a political nation divided torn apart by centrifugal geographic differences.[170] In the words of the *Plan national*:

> La France résume l'Europe, en exprimant toute sa diversité. La vie quotidienne d'un paysan en Provence est plus proche de celle d'un paysan hellénique que de celle d'un agriculteur de l'Artois et cependant ils appartiennent au même pays. La France est une nation essentiellement politique où l'histoire a démenti la géographie. Elle ne peut évoquer les mirages d'une unité naturelle due au sol, au climat ou à la race, ni même à la langue...cette diversité territoriale a créé un déséquilibre qui, accentué par le progrès technique et économique, constitue désormais un danger pour l'avenir et peut-être, pour l'unité de la nation.[171]

Luckily, there was a solution. Steeped in the international development language of his recent travels, Lamour reaffirmed that France simply had "un problème de développement économique et social du type classique, tel qu'il se pose dans le monde entier, avec une différence d'ampleur mais non de nature selon les peuples et les continents. Il y a lieu de le résoudre en lui appliquant les principes et les moyens que l'expérience a révélés efficaces."[172] The postwar development idea, reinforced by a barrage of EEC statistics, simply confirmed a century-old program of integrating the nation's diverse *terroirs*.

In fact, Lamour was proposing an unprecedented national program. The *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* aimed for nothing less than to "intégrer dans un ensemble coordonné les interventions intéressant la totalité des activités économiques et

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[170] In Roger Chartier's words, nineteenth-century scholars viewed the Saint-Malo/Geneva line as "le 'front' qui sépare les deux économies politiques" of Europe. In 1826, Charles Dupin offered an analysis that clearly prefigured Lamour's 1962 description. The nation's northern half, Dupin wrote, was "favorisée surtout par le voisinage des peuples très avancés en industrie, et très heureux en institutions, comme les peuples britanniques et bataves." The south, by contrast, suffered from its proximity to "ces peuples d'Espagne et de Portugal, de Sardaigne et d'Afrique, depuis longtemps retardés, dégradés par de mauvaises lois et de mauvais gouvernements." Roger Chartier, "La ligne Saint-Malo-Genève," in *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), 745, 750-751. This trope persisted. In 1877, the geographer Élisée Reclus viewed France as the "junction" and "fusion" of northern Europe and the broad Mediterranean world (including Africa). He too considered that each of the two Frances was more similar to neighboring civilizations than to the other half of France. Florence Deprest notes: "Le Midi méditerranéen français est ainsi pour Reclus une région présentant une forte altérité par rapport au reste de la France. Ces paysages ressemblent plus à l'Afrique qu'à tout le reste du continent européen. Le littoral est comparé à celui de Tunis et d'Alger." Big cities and especially Paris were arenas of civilizational mixture. Florence Deprest, "Nord et Sud en France dans les Géographies Universelles (1829-1990): une différenciation à l'épreuve des mutations de la géographie," *Revue du Nord* 87 (2005): 430-433.

[171] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. I-4.

[172] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. I-3.

humaines."[173] Lamour justified this unbounded state intervention with the argument that poor regions could not pay for their own modernization. "C'est le rôle d'un État moderne d'intervenir pour suppléer à cette impuissance primitive," he wrote, "en assumant les charges que ces régions ne peuvent prendre à leur compte." At times, the Plan's description of this novel relationship between the French state and provincial populations sounded more like the language of a new "cooperation" between rich and poor countries than that of the traditional imbrications of central and local governments in France. The national state was a "donateur" and provincial populations were its "bénéficiaires." The state provided a temporary "aide extérieure" that could push poor regions into "une expansion autonome." For this to work, the latter had to consent sacrifices and work their way out of poverty, otherwise the experiment in aid would turn into a relationship of dependency.[174]

Lamour had kicked off the CSC initiative by telling the press, "L'Algérie n'est pas tout," and asking "Pourquoi notre province n'a-t-elle pas, elle aussi, son Plan de Constantine?"[175] In fact, the CSC group echoed the approach French planners took in Algeria. It eschewed the marginal-cost analyses and "indicative" prescriptions of the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP) and government ministries. The CSC group proclaimed that the state's role was not to worry about "la rentabilité immédiate" of its investments, but rather their "rentabilité différée qui se traduira en prospérité générale et équilibre pour l'ensemble du pays...et qui s'appréciera moins en valeur financière qu'en bonheur humain et en paix sociale."[176] This appreciation was dressed up as a new economic reasoning. The CSC offered a faith in regional development that took spatial Keynesianism to an extreme. France was a "pays neuf," with untold potential for new accumulation. As such, even a vast modernization program would be a profitable

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[173] Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone*, 251.

[174] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. I.10-11. On the other hand, a national polity—and the lobbying of politicians from France's "strong" regions—ensured that programs justified in the name of fighting the worst cases of underdevelopment were quickly generalized to all the provinces. Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, II-214; minutes of the Section permanente "Aménagement du territoire," 28 June 1961, 3, CAC 19770818/2.

[175] Undated transcript for a news article, during Sudreau and Lamour press conference after the first CIAT, Pierre Sudreau papers 91AJ/25.

[176] CSC plan, cited in Pierre Massé, "Note sur un projet du Plan d'aménagement du territoire," 6 December 1961, 4, CAC 19770818/10.

investment in the long run. However, in Lamour's appreciation, economic rationale was not the only variable in the new development planning. On the contrary, *aménagement du territoire* was "une perspective géopolitique à long terme qui comporte un concept à la fois économique et humain."[177]

To begin with, the new planning sought to combat the political danger of regional inequalities, which the CSC team described with alarmist language. In 1960, the Construction Ministry's director of *aménagement du territoire*, Pierre Randet, warned, "Une opposition se dessine entre régions riches et régions pauvres...qui pourrait, le développement du Marché Commun y aidant, devenir *internationale*."[178] After two more years of colonial war and France's own peasant "revolt," the *Plan national* was even more menacing. "La défense d'un pays est à présent aussi urgente sur le front intérieur que sur le front extérieur," it stated. "...La misère engendre la subversion. L'aménagement du territoire est désormais un élément décisif d'une politique moderne de défense nationale."[179]

In addition to reducing disparities, regionalization could be a force for the social and political integration of a nation deeply shaken by the recent turmoil. Upon regaining the presidency, Charles de Gaulle had called planning an "ardente obligation."[180] Now the CSC declared that only regionalization could fulfill that vision. The CGP's national experts and commissions remained distant and aloof from ordinary citizens. By contrast, a plan that mapped out concrete development projects, such as schools and roads, would capture the public's interest much better than the CGP's abstract discussion of national sectors and growth rates. Moreover, true regional assemblies would branch planning down into the concrete realities of provincial towns and connect the everyday lives of French residents up into a collective modernization agenda.[181]

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[177] "Note pour M. le ministre de la Construction," undated, CAC 19770818/10.

[178] Italics in original. Minutes of the Section permanente "Aménagement du territoire," 21 June 1960, 3, CAC 19770818/2.

[179] Lamour, *L' Aménagement du territoire*, 69-70.

[180] Romain Pasquier, "La régionalisation française revisitée. Fédéralisme, mouvement régional et élites modernisatrices (1950-1964)," *Revue française de science politique* 53 (2003): 120. On de Gaulle's belief on democratic planning, which was shared on the Left by Pierre Mendès-France, see Marc Olivier Baruch, "Les élites d'État dans la modernisation," in *De Gaulle et les élites*, ed. Serge Berstein, et al. (Paris: La Découverte, 2008), 105.

[181] For Lamour and Sudreau, proof was in the pudding. Regional politicians and boosters had eagerly helped craft the *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* and Parliament then hailed it. By contrast,

The publication of the *Plan national* coincided with the ceasefire in Algeria. For its authors, decolonization only reinforced the arguments on behalf of *aménagement du territoire*. Domestic modernization was a way for France to turn back inward the energies it had long invested in overseas empire.[182] As the Construction Minister Pierre Sudreau told the prime minister in a confidential letter:

> le repli du pays sur son territoire métropolitain amène la population et surtout la jeunesse, par un réflexe de défense organique, à chercher dans l'équipement, la modernisation et le développement de l'ensemble de ce territoire, la compensation de ses déceptions et, en même temps qu'une raison de vivre et d'espérer, les ressources d'une activité accrue et mieux appliquée.[183]

According to this vision, planning would do several things. First, it was "le seul levier d'un nouvel esprit civique."[184] In addition, decolonization both required and allowed a new economic effort. The loss of colonies meant that France had to exploit more intensively its remaining national territory to maintain its rank in the world.[185] In

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there was nothing but growing frustration with the CGP's centralism and foot-dragging in designing its national set of regional plans—begun in 1955 and dead on arrival in 1962. Pierre Sudreau, "Note en réponse aux observations du Commissaire Général au Plan sur le Plan d'aménagement du territoire," 15 December 1961, Pierre Randet personal archives, IFA, Article 1-3; Pierre Sudreau to Prime Minister, 2 April 1962, CAC 19770818/5; "Confidentiel," draft note marked AT 1*1001, CAC 19770818/10.

[182] This hypothesis of modernization as a replacement for empire has been developed by several different scholars. In the specific realm of *aménagement du territoire*, Marie-Claire Robic and Bernard Paillard note that decolonization justified a more "intensive" development of the remaining national territory. Marie-Claire Robic, "Métropole, métropôle, les géographes et les métropoles d'équilibre," *Strates* 4 (1989); Bernard Paillard, *Damnation de Fos* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1981), 47. Jacques Marseille makes the case historically, arguing that France abandoned imperial expansion (and a protectionist imperial economy) as the necessary precondition for modernization at home, in preparation for the new European and global competition, Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français*. Kristin Ross makes a more sweeping claim, focusing on the inward turn of discourse and modernizing aspiration. As Ross notes, this gives a literal meaning to Henri Lefebvre's notion of "the colonization of everyday life." However, Ross largely fails to make the distinction between, on the one hand, the transfer of practices, capital, and analytic framework from empire to metropolitan France and, on the other hand, colonization as metaphor for forms of domination and uneven social geographies. That becomes especially problematic in her parallel of colonial rule and torture in Algeria and the promotion of a "domestic" political economy in French households. Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 7-9, 77.

[183] "Projet de lettre de M. Sudreau à M. Massé," undated, CAC 19770818/10.

[184] "Note pour M. Le Ministre de la Construction," undated, CAC 19770818/10.

[185] Regional development could "permettre au pays, replié sur son territoire métropolitain, de maintenir et d'amplifier son rôle par l'utilisation rationnelle et complète de toutes ses ressources matérielles et humaines." CSC note, "Projet de Conclusions," 19 November 1962, CAC 19770818/5. Another note viewed the reduction of the size of France's territory as a sort of organic pressure on the French population and its collective need for expansion: "La France est secouée par une mutation qui fera date dans son histoire: hier, ce pays pauvre en enfants, saigné par des conflits meurtriers, fondait un Empire; aujourd'hui, de nouveau féconde, la Métropole doit accueillir les français [sic] qui reviennent d'Afrique, et ouvrir ses portes à la pression d'une Europe surpeuplée. C'est, singulièrement, au moment où sa force d'expansion est

exchange, the repatriation of colonial capital and Frenchmen could be a powerful stimulus to provincial development—as Lamour knew firsthand from his work in Languedoc. With decolonization now a *fait accompli*, the CSC let its "Cartierism" run wild. "On a partout investi à fonds perdu sauf en France," it complained, "on a aidé toutes les populations sauf la population française, on a exploité les déserts africains mais délaissé un peu plus chaque jour nos provinces et créé le désert aquitain, le désert alpin, le désert auvergnat."[186]

Finally, for the CSC group, decolonization and European integration proved the importance of geographic restructuring for economic renewal. As century-old trade patterns were upended, specific regional economies needed to be revamped and the Hexagon's entire national structure needed to be altered to fit its role in the new international division of labor. Eastern France in particular was set to become a corridor connecting the developed European core and an industrializing Third World periphery. The city of Marseille exemplified these trends. This venerable colonial gateway would be revamped as the outlet of a vast eastern canal running along the Rhine and Rhone rivers and as a seaside chemical-industrial complex. It would import Third World resources and funnel out the finished goods of Europe's manufacturing belt.[187] All in all, Lamour concluded, "l'aménagement du territoire...est la condition du maintien du pays au rang des nations modernes...à un moment où la nation, repliée sur sa métropole, associe son destine à un ensemble européen mieux équipé."[188]

The *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* was an indictment of the CGP. The CSC complained that the CGP's "accountants" remained timid and aloof at a time

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portée à un niveau jamais atteint, que notre pays voit ses espaces se rétrécir. Cette situation est lourde de menaces: une jeunesse nombreuse, désorientée par la guerre d'Algérie, et dont les rangs seront grossis par les français rapatriés d'Afrique du Nord, mal remis de leur déception, peut être entraînée au désespoir si un champ assez vaste n'est pas offert à son esprit d'entreprise." "Confidentiel," draft note marked AT 1*1001, CAC 19770818/10.

[186] *Plan d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, II-215. Or as an internal note put it: "Notre pays a bâti des métropoles en Asie et en Afrique, mais ses propres villes sont d'un autre âge; Outre-Mer, il a défriché des terres vierges, assaini des marais, créé de vastes domaines, mais il a laissé vieillir la structure et l'équipement de son propre terroir; il a construit des barrages sur le Niger et sur les Oueds africains, mais le Rhône n'est équipé que sur le quart de son parcours." "Confidentiel," draft note marked AT 1*1001, CAC 19770818/10.

[187] Conseil Supérieur de la Construction, *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire*, 1962, p. II.121-124; Paillard, *Damnation de Fos*, 32-33, 41-44.

[188] Lamour editorial, Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc (revue bimestrielle de la Compagnie nationale d'aménagement de la région du Bas-Rhône et du Languedoc), 5, 13.

when the regional problem threatened to tear the nation apart. As tensions heated up, the Construction Minister Pierre Sudreau even denounced a "désaccord total entre le [Commissariat général du] Plan et la nation."[189] The head of the CGP, Pierre Massé, hit back, opposing the logic of his "accountants" to the CSC's "dreamers." Massé unified a widespread resistance within the administration to the new plan, which was criticized in turn as economic nonsense, as a dangerous politicization of the regional problem, and as a spur to provincial claims-making.[190]

This unprecedented government infighting about the sense and control over regional development led to the creation of France's renowned regional planning agency, the Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale (DATAR).[191] The DATAR was a *sui generis* institution designed to be the ultimate "mission administration." It was not a ministry and had very little formal control over other ministries' services. However, its agents had the prerogative to intervene in the affairs of all state services. It also created a series of new "missions" for specific tasks. These ranged from the implementation of metropolitan plans for the largest provincial cities to the vast development of tourism on the Languedoc littoral, which Guichard took back from Lamour's semipublic agency.[192] The DATAR's sprawling reach finally

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[189] "Projet de lettre de M. Sudreau à M. Massé," CAC 19770818/10.

[190] Pierre Massé, "Note sur un projet du Plan d'aménagement du territoire," 6 December 1961, 5-6, CAC 19770818/10. The Prime Minister's cabinet in turn ordered the CSC to stop "animer un lobby" of regionalist agitation. Racine letter, 13 February 1962, Michel Debré personal archives, CHSP 2DE/20. Sudreau's successor, Jacques Maziol, dropped the *Plan national d'aménagement du territoire* and told the CSC to move back to less sensational issues. Compte rendu de la séance plénière du CSC, 6 June 1962, "Ouverture de la séance par M. Maziol," CAC 19770818/1.

[191] Prime Minister Georges Pompidou had initially created a *Ministère délégué à l'aménagement du territoire* in April 1962. Echoing the CSC's ideal of regional planning as the organizing framework for all state interventions, Pompidou made the new portfolio a "super-ministry." In one draft, it would have had jurisdiction over the CGP, Paris planning, and various ministerial directions. ("Maurice Schumann voudrait constituer une grande direction de l'aménagement du territoire," *Le Monde*, 6 May 1962.) However, the new ministry lasted less than month. Its overreaching ambitions provoked such fierce resistance within the administration that the final texts on its attributions were never even published. When the minister, Maurice Schumann, quit the government in protest to De Gaulle's European policy, Pompidou seized the chance to end what was clearly a failed experiment. Grémion, *Profession, décideurs*, 142-144. Pierre Massé centralized the reaction against the super-ministry. He decried this "victoire de l'Aménagement sur le Plan" as the triumph of space over time: a misplaced faith in the efficacy of spatial restructuring to prepare France's economic future. (Note to Giscard, 17 April 1962, and letter to Ortoli (Directeur de cabinet for Georges Pompidou), "Plan et aménagement du territoire," June 1962, CAC 19930278/50; Pierre Massé, "Note sur un projet du Plan d'aménagement du territoire," 6 December 61, CAC 19770818/10.)

[192] In Paris, it watched over traditional concerns like Agriculture or Tourism as well as the spending of the FDES fund and even the annual budget negotiations. In the provinces, the DATAR helped direct the state's

institutionalized the ideal, created in the 1940s, of *aménagement du territoire* as a totalizing project of social and economic engineering.

Alongside this totalizing state intervention, the DATAR fulfilled the other tenet of the mission administration: that development was political. The agency was placed under the direct authority of the prime minister. Moreover, the first director of the DATAR, Olivier Guichard, was a personal friend of George Pompidou and a venerable Gaullist strategist; he had been the assistant director of de Gaulle's cabinet in the 1950s.[193] Guichard set up shop next to the prime minister's office. That way he could be Pompidou's political councilor in the morning, his development specialist in the afternoon, and his alter ego in everything from budget arbitrations to the distribution of state spending during his tours of the provinces.[194] In addition, Guichard immediately became the main proponent within the government of a political vision of regionalization, which the CGP and ministerial services resisted. Like Lamour but with a partisan ambition, Guichard saw regionalization as an opportunity to anchor the Fifth Republic, cultivating a new generation of modernizing elites to accelerate development—and hopefully support the Gaullist regime—while taming the most troublesome regionalist groups.[195]

If Guichard was an old hand at Gaullist politics, he had earned his stripes as a development specialist during his 17 months in the French Sahara. His overseas agency, the Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes (OCRS), oddly resembled the subsequent DATAR. Guichard's mission in the Sahara was to implement a territory-wide development plan. That was the key to a geopolitical project: legitimating a

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new regional "missions." Bernard Pouyet, *La Délégation à l'aménagement du territoire et à l'action régionale* (Paris: Editions Cujas, 1968), 60-102; Essig, *DATAR*. For a short overview of the DATAR's rise and decline, see: Jean-Luc Bodiguel, "La DATAR: quarante ans d'histoire," *Revue française d'administration publique* 3 (2006).

[193] Guichard's biographer calls him the "centurion du Général de Gaulle." Maurice Grassin, *Olivier Guichard* (Paris: Siloe, 1996), 7-8.

[194] Ibid., 115; Jérôme Monod, *Les Vagues du temps: Mémoires* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 92. Pouyet called the director of the DATAR a "démultiplication de la personne du Premier Ministre," Pouyet, *La Délégation*, 125 and more generally 111-127. For an interesting analysis of the problem by a former head of the DATAR, see Essig, *DATAR*, 92, 127-154, 257-270.

[195] The concrete manifestations of Guichard's vision were consultative regional assemblies—the Commissions de développement économique régional (CODER), which he drove through in 1964 over CGP resistance—and metropolitan planning agencies for a designated set of regional capitals, new towns, and other strategic projects. Catherine Grémion, "Le général de Gaulle, la régionalisation et l'aménagement du territoire," in *De Gaulle en son siècle, Tome III: Moderniser la France* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1992), 495-499; Grémion, *Profession, décideurs*, 146-148, 166-194.

continued French presence in this oil-rich region, whose different territories were heading toward divergent political fates, including independence for some. To accommodate this shifting political scene, Guichard turned the OCRS into a mission administration. He discharged most tasks of immediate administration to the various territorial authorities. The OCRS focused instead on elaborating a common plan, eliciting local adherence to its goals, coordinating administrations, and fulfilling missions that no one else could do. Guichard launched a series of specialized programs, from the construction of irrigated farms to industrial growth poles, vast desert highways, and new towns.[196]

Upon the end of the Algerian War, Guichard literally changed the signs on the OCRS building in Paris, bought a wall map of France to replace his map of the Saharan oil deposits, and put his new development vocation to work for the "French desert."[197] He was once again a "geopolitician."[198] The DATAR's program echoed that of the OCRS: centralizing oversight in the name of a national plan, finding provincial elites to support its new programs, and launching a web of ad hoc agencies that created a parallel state administration for the most important modernization projects.

Guichard justified these initiatives by announcing the need for a sweeping modernization of the Hexagon.[199] Guichard wrote that the France of 1965 was still a rural nation that lagged behind its neighbors. Over the next twenty years, it would transition "d'un stade à un autre du développement économique." This jump to a new stage of modernization would entail "des révolution de tous ordres"—in geography, the economy, and mentalities. In the process, functional spatial planning would achieve the process of national integration. Planning experts would design a "vocation" for each regional economy and link these complementary units through a network of big cities, modern communications, and standardized infrastructure. In the process, functional

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[196] Armel Bouger, "L'OCRS: La dernière frontière de la France coloniale" (masters thesis, Université de Rennes, 1993).
[197] Letter of 7 May 1963 requesting credits to replace map, CAC 19860308/1.
[198] In the words of his official biographer. Grassin explains that Guichard had "un point de vue d'organisateur de l'espace à dominante politique." Grassin, *Olivier Guichard*, 121.
[199] Here too, he echoed Lamour, for a good reason: Lamour carried forward the CSC's program as the long-standing president of a new Commission national d'aménagement du territoire (CNAT), which provided much of the matière grise for the DATAR. Pitte, *Philippe Lamour, père de l'aménagement du territoire*, 222-248. On the continuity between the CSC and CNAT plans, see Trintignac, *Aménager l'hexagone*, 244. The CNAT recommendations are in *Premier rapport de la Commission nationale de l'aménagement du territoire*, ed. Commissariat général du Plan (Paris, 1964).

space would largely replace territorial attachments based on history, rootedness, and proximity to family. "Dans cet espace polarisé," Guichard explained, "l'importance des équipements, donc du niveau de civilisation, compterait plus pour les habitants que le folklore et l'histoire." Planners needed to "libérer l'homme de son milieu géographique" and to overcome provincialism, with its "marque de particularisme et de rivalités stériles."[200]

This repudiation of the past was meant to express a break with Guichard's predecessors. The DATAR inherited much from the *aménagement du territoire* tradition created in the 1940s. But as it took over the Construction Ministry's leadership in the field, many of regional policy's pioneers were also cast to the sidelines. A new generation of engineers and administrators, generally trained after the war, wanted to overthrow traditional France, not preserve it.[201] With so many of the new crew having served in Overseas France, the DATAR's vision of state-led modernization must have evoked the revolution across the Mediterranean as much as the future visible across the Atlantic. Indeed, Guichard wrote that if France intuitively belonged to a different stage of modernization than Third World countries, its sudden economic takeoff and "mutation dans tous les domaines...ressemble étrangement, par son rythme, à celui de divers pays en voie de développement."[202] However, successfully managing the transition "n'est possible qu'à partir du moment où les pouvoirs publics disposent d'instruments d'intervention dans la vie économique et s'en servent de façon concertée. Les pays en voie de développement, où l'aménagement et la mise en valeur se confondent, le savent

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[200] Olivier Guichard, *Aménager la France* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1965), 45-48, 68. For the context of such functionalist spatial planning, see Weaver, *Regional Development and the Local Community*, 79-82. Weaver notes that in postwar spatial development theory, concrete territory increasingly fell out of view in favor of abstract, functional space. The technocratic calculations that designated cities as growth poles took this to an extreme: "All connections with the concrete world of cities and regions with proper names and individual identities...were lost, etherealized into the *n*-dimensional realm of economic space"(80). On the intellectual genealogy of such thinking in terms of the lynchpin of the DATAR's urban network, the *métropoles d'équilibre*, see Robic, "Métropole."

[201] Isabelle Couzon, "La place de la ville dans le discours des aménageurs du début des années 1920 à la fin des années 1960," *Cybergeo* (1997); Massardier, *Expertise et aménagement du territoire*, 101-137; Jean-Charles Fredenucci, "L'urbanisme d'État: nouvelles pratiques, nouveaux acteurs," *Ethnologie française* 33 (2003); Pasquier, "La Régionalisation française revisitée," 121; Marie-Claire Robic, "Ruralistes ou pro-urbains, les géographes? La ville modernisatrice" (paper presented at the conference "La ville mal aimée," Paris, 2007).

[202] Olivier Guichard, "Problèmes actuels de l'aménagement du territoire," speech of 3 November 1964 at Sciences Po Paris; Guichard, *Aménager la France*, 30, 34.

bien."[203] With the DATAR in place, the French state was finally equipped to attempt this totalizing transformation of the provinces.

Conclusion

In many respects, Olivier Guichard epitomized the impact of France's imperial history and decolonization on *aménagement du territoire* in the 1950s and 1960s. Guichard was a political strategist, not a colonial specialist, and he spent less than two years overseas. Yet Paris' bid to rapidly modernize its African possessions—first to preserve them as French territories and then to maintain France's presence through an ad hoc development agency—gave him unprecedented financial and administrative means to undertake comprehensive territorial planning. This was the story of France's broader overseas project in a nutshell. When Guichard shifted focus to metropolitan *aménagement du territoire* in 1963, he entered a policy field whose discourses and politcal dynamics were already well defined—contrary to its own myth, the DATAR did not invent French regionalization—but where his own imperial vision was also widely shared. What could be more natural for this Saharan modernizer than to discuss programs with planners who demanded a Constantine Plan for France's provinces or to hash out a regionalization reform with prefects who had just supervised one in Algeria? In sum, his overseas stint was a short interval in Guichard's career but it belonged to a much broader imperial moment, which had a profound impact on *aménagement du territoire* as the Hexagon was finally moving forward with this experiment in comprehensive planning.

On the other hand, Guichard's case shows that there is no single relationship between colonies and regional development in France. Despite his sideways glances to underdeveloped countries and journalists' periodic jibes that he had jumped from the Saharan desert to the French desert, Guichard in fact spoke little about his overseas experiences.[204] As late as the mid-1950s, state administrators could still speak of internal colonialism in a positive light, but after 1962 they clearly preferred to let the nation's

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[203] Ibid., 18.

[204] "Je me trouvais pour la première fois avec un territoire à aménager," Guichard recalled of the Sahara. "Un grand territoire. Cette mer qui s'est un jour pour moi offerte sous les ailes de l'avion...A force la parcourir en tous sens...j'ai fini par avoir l'impression de la comprendre." Olivier Guichard, *Un chemin tranquille* (Paris: Flammarion, 1975), 88-89.

imperial past rest in silence. Now it was the regional opposition that had the clearest hold over colonial metaphors—and they opposed it to the DATAR more than to any other institution. While Guichard reminisced about his days flying over the Sahara to plan out rational development, regionalists like Lafont saw him as the personification of a top-down capitalist state that expropriated local communities in the name of modernizing them. Clearly, government officials had no monopoly on the lessons of overseas France. Politicians, boosters, and social movements used recent colonial history for their own purposes. As these groups politicized the Hexagon's regional inequalities and clashed with the unprecedented state apparatus created to open the provinces to new development, the metaphor of nation as empire was guaranteed a solid place in the France of the 1960s.

CHAPTER SIX

The Wild West: Citroën and the Reshaping of Brittany

In 1951, Citroën announced the creation of a rubber-work factory in the Breton capital, Rennes, to which it added a much larger car assembly plant seven years later. The Paris automaker was immediately hailed as a pioneer of industrial decentralization. Citroën not only gave government decentralizers one of their first major successes, but also blazed a trail further west than any of its rivals. Above all, most previous attempts at decentralization had targeted areas with some industrial tradition. By contrast, Citroën chose Brittany precisely to recruit among its poor peasantry.[1] Farm modernization and a lack of job alternatives held out the promise for the car manufacturer of an endless supply of cheap and docile labor. In return, one of France's most rural regions received a radically new development trajectory. Citroën's assembly plant was hailed as the most modern in Europe and became Brittany's largest industrial employer.[2] At the time, only two other industrial firms in Rennes employed more than 900 workers; by 1973, Citroën's factories employed more than 14,000.[3]

Citroën-Rennes became the emblem of a certain kind of decentralization: an industrial project that conscientiously preserved the social order of a peasant France during the industrialization of the Trente Glorieuses. The auto factories themselves needed to be close to the city, but they would be run by "des ruraux conservant leur domicile ou leur terre à la campagne, et y retournant chaque jour après leur journée de travail à l'usine." In this way, the automaker promised to "faire naître un prototype...d'usine 'verte'" that finally corresponded to the regional planning ideal

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[1] Jean-Louis Loubet, *Citroën, Peugeot, Renault et les autres: Soixante ans de stratégies* (Paris: ETAI, 1995), 76-77.

[2] Ibid., 77; Valérie Le Boudec, "Citroën-Rennes et l'espace géographique" (masters thesis in geography, Université Rennes II, 1990), 14.

[3] More broadly, the department of Ille-et-Vilaine had only 13.2 percent of its active population employed in industries other than construction. Michel Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton 1950-2000* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1993), 145-146; André Meynier and G. Le Guen, "Les grandes villes françaises: Rennes," *Notes et études documentaires* (January 24 1966): 11-13; Philippe Caro, "Les Usines Citroën de Rennes: Origines, implantation et évolutions (1951 à 1974)" (mémoire de DEA, EHESS, 1993), 109-114.

theorized in the 1940s.[4] Keeping workers in the countryside was meant to avoid the concentration of traditional industrial cities. Citroën also echoed the earlier social project of Vichy planners: to avoid the emergence of an urban working class, with its higher wages, housing needs, and unions.[5]

In many respects, these projects sought to turn back the clock to the rural industrialization of nineteenth-century France. However, in the early 1950s they were revamped with a forward-looking metaphor: the Hexagon was headed for an "American" future, in which farmer-workers mingled with freshly-minted suburbanites. And if Citroën-Rennes proved so successful, it was because the "green factory" model satisfied multiple groups. It held as much appeal for Breton politicians, who were determined to keep regional development "balanced" and workers out of downtown, as for a labor-hungry manufacturer taking advantage of the cheap consumption and social stability of the countryside. Moreover, Citroën's social project depended on Breton workers' distaste for city living and aspiration to homeownership.

Beneath official pronouncements of regional consensus, however, there was a great deal of hesitation and division. Government and company officials were eager to see poor peasants as so much surplus labor ripe for the picking, but Citroën soon ran into critical recruitment shortfalls. That reopened old doubts, only recently dispelled, about whether rural Frenchmen were able and willing to enter "industrial society." Officials also had misgivings on the issue of workers' housing. Their ideals at once looked back to the traditional farmhouse and forward to American suburbia. However, as late as the 1960s, the continued weakness of workers' wages, mass motorization, and individual home construction still risked creating the urban workforce all groups wished to avoid, as former peasants fled to the city in search of affordable housing. I reserve one last issue for the following chapter: the place of workers' rights in the decentralized factory, as an authoritarian employer headed West with a ferocious determination to eliminate unions.

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[4] "Ville et campagne face au 'fait Citroën,'" *Ouest-France*, clipping ca. 1960, ADIV 30J/118.

[5] On the stabilization of a distinctive working class, I am drawing from Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 73-75; Gérard Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française (XIXème-XXème siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), see in particular 60, 77-98, 112-118, 199-204, 264-267.

These problems were largely overcome, but at a cost that the automaker had initially hoped to avoid. In their headquarters on the Quai de Javel, in Paris' fifteenth arrondissement, company officials vowed not to get bogged down in the regional commitments that were the traditional hallmark of provincial manufacturers. Fordist production and new government policies for regional development were supposed to homogenize space, allowing national corporations to effortlessly install and command branch plants from Paris. In reality, Quai de Javel was forced to lay down territorial roots and deal with the particularities of rural Bretons.

For nearly two decades, Citroën-Rennes was presented as a social experiment. Pierre Bercot, a top Citroën executive and the company's president from 1958 to 1970, saw the move to Rennes as a chance to design a new workforce from scratch. Breton peasants, he wrote, were "des hommes en quelque sorte neufs, non formés – mais aussi non déformés – par la fréquentation des usines et l'habitude du travail industriel."[6] Philippe de Calan, the director of the car assembly plant, went even further. He enthusiastically embraced Brittany as "une terre vierge," where planners and manufacturers could work in concert to invent the "civilisation industrielle" of the future.[7] A number of outside observers followed Citroën's experiment. From Breton boosters and state planners in Paris to Italian automakers, there was an eagerness to learn about how modern factories functioned in rural regions. One community's experience with industrialization therefore became a general lesson on social change in peasant societies.[8]

1. Building a Better Region

Citroën's decentralization involved a partnership in which corporate strategy, state planning, and region-building overlapped in unexpected ways. Many executives at

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[6] Pierre Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën: Document privé* (Paris: La Pensée universelle, 1977), 50. Bercot remained Citroën's "honorary president" until 1977. Jean-Louis Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 507-508.

[7] Philippe De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural: l'usine Citroën de Rennes-La Janais," *Géographie et recherche* 7 (Oct. 1973): 17.

[8] A word on sources: in both chapters on Rennes, I use Hubert Budor's 2001 documentary, *Les Paysans de Citroën*. This collection of interviews with retired workers from the Rennes plants offers a unique glimpse into the aspect of social change that is often hardest to trace—the viewpoint of "Citroën's peasants" themselves. Hubert Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën* (France, 2001).

Quai de Javel resisted the western strategy of Pierre Bercot and Philippe de Calan.[9] As a result, the two men found some of their best allies outside the company, among the administration officials in charge of *aménagement du territoire* and the new boosters in Rennes. This partnership was built on a common regional vision: rapidly mobilizing Brittany's rural labor while keeping workers' residencies dispersed in the city's rural hinterland.

Moving to Brittany

It was the government that first prompted the Rennes experiment by ordering Citroën to expand in the provinces. Alongside this stick, the state offered a big carrot: the Rennes car factories received one of the most generous packages of subsidies and infrastructure ever doled out in the name of industrial decentralization.[10] If Citroën ultimately emerged as a pioneer of decentralization and a crafty manipulator of regional differences, public authorities thus provided much of the early impetus and legwork behind its new strategy.[11]

Citroën had initially clung to the Paris region, underscoring that even in the 1950s, decentralization was no automatic outcome of shifting labor, land, and transportation costs. The "French Ford," Citroën saw no contradiction in placing vast assembly lines and dispersed production networks in the City of Light. André Citroën had built a state-of-the-art assembly plant right in the capital's fifteenth arrondissement—and then went bankrupt rebuilding it there in the first years of the Depression. In 1934, Citroën was bought out by the Michelin family. The Michelins were conservative provincial industrialists, but they were no less attached to Paris. Rejecting the notion that mass production required a single integrated factory, they haphazardly accumulated

[9] Philippe Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation de Citroën à Rennes La Janais" (masters thesis, Université de Rennes II, 1992), 60-69; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 44-47, 50.
[10] On Citroën's move to Rennes, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes"; Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation"; Patrick Harismendy, "L'automobile: du bocage à la ville," in *La Bretagne des savants et des ingénieurs: Le XXe siècle*, ed. Jean et Nicole Dhombres (Rennes: Éditions Ouest-France, 1999). On the broader decentralization of the French auto industry, see Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 358-363.
[11] On Citroën's move to Rennes, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes"; Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation"; Harismendy, "L'Automobile: du bocage à la ville." On the broader decentralization of the French auto industry, see Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 358-363.

smaller production sites in the Paris suburbs. The automaker owned 21 units in 1954, connected by a complex ballet of truck and barge shipments.[12]

Government decentralizers saw this setup as the ultimate proof that urban industry had become perfectly irrational. Citroën was constantly starved for space; its Byzantine production complex drove up production costs and wreaked havoc on western Paris.[13] But this system had a key advantage: it fit the company's tight budget.[14] Things began to change in 1950, when the Ministry of Reconstruction and Urbanism (MRU) decided to get tough about decentralization. Unluckily for Citroën, the automaker desperately needed to expand its production facilities. It thus became one of the first companies to fall into the MRU's snares, a reluctant pioneer of decentralization.[15]

Pierre Bercot—a free-market ideologue who was always ready to denounce government interference—grumbled about being forced to move.[16] But he quickly adopted decentralization as his personal project and took the initiative to settle in Brittany in 1951. Rennes benefitted from a bit of sheer luck: Bercot was a Breton by origin, born in the department of Finistère. But his native region had a number of selling points. Its principal advantage, of course, was labor. Bercot made no bones about it: he targeted Brittany to take advantage of its abundance of poor peasants with no union tradition.[17]

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[12] By the early 1970s, the Paris region had dropped to only 63 percent of Citroën's total personnel, due to decentralized expansion. Jean-Louis Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën, 1924-1968: Etude historique" (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris-Nanterre, 1979), 514. On Citroën's Paris region production setup, see Jean-François Gravier, *Décentralisation et progrès technique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1954), 127-129; Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën," 475-476, 488-493.

[13] Gravier, *Décentralisation et progrès technique*, 127-129; Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 360. The Minister of Reconstruction and Urbanism who forced Citroën out of the region, Eugène Claudius-Petit, knew this problem intimately from his daily commute. "Je rencontre constamment les camions chargés de carrosseries Citroën qui circulent dans la capitale," he complained to the head of Paris planning. "Note à M. Gibel," 6 July 1950, Eugène Claudius-Petit archives, CHAN 538AP/82.

[14] Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 283.

[15] Pierre Randet, *L'Aménagement du territoire: Genèse et étapes d'un grand dessein* (Paris: Documentation française, 1994), 64. On the mix of space and state constraints that pushed Citroën to decentralize, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 15-27, 42-50, 148; Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën," 400-401, 410, 451-461, 488-493.

[16] Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën*, 57-58. Jean-Louis Loubet writes, "Bercot mène une bataille, celle de l'entreprise face à l'État et à la Régie Renault qui ressemble tous les maux...'la mise en place d'une arme tactique dans l'offensive du socialisme.'" Jean-Louis Loubet, "Pierre Bercot," in *Dictionnaire historique des patrons français*, ed. Jean-Claude Daumas (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 76. The MRU's order to decentralize lent itself to Bercot's suspicion of an anti-Citroën conspiracy. The ministry ordered Citroën to the provinces in 1951 and 1955, but let Paris' other two automakers build major assembly plants in the Paris region—Renault in 1950 and SIMCA in 1954.

[17] Minutes of the Comité directeur du Bureau d'études industrielles, 18 July 1960,

On the other hand, Citroën's new factory also needed to be close to a central location with the urban amenities necessary to attract manangers and engineers. This all but imposed a Rennes location. The city was well connected to Paris; industrial elites could find excellent schools for their children, good shopping, culture, and communications, and access to the West's forests and beaches.[18]

Rennes also offered a good business environment. By the early 1950s, it contained the political mix that would assure three decades of rapid expansion: a center-right majority, dominated by the Christian Democratic party Mouvement républicain populaire (MRP), and a resolutely progrowth outlook among municipal authorities, who led the drive for economic development. A movement for urban renewal and expansion emerged in the 1940s, embodied by men like Jules Prod'homme, a young businessman who was installed as the president of Rennes' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) at the Liberation. Prod'homme embraced the MRU's vision of *aménagement du territoire* and soon emerged as a leading proponent of attracting Parisian industry to Brittany. He was joined by Henri Fréville, Rennes' mayor from 1953 to 1977 (as well as a history professor and, thanks to the *cumul des mandats*, a departmental assemblyman, *député*, and then senator). Fréville broke with the city's previously cautious city plans to become one of France's most emblematic progrowth mayors during his long time in office. Finally, as we have seen, the regional development coalition Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts bretons (CELIB), created in 1950, quickly became a powerful promoter of Breton expansion.[19]

ADIV 30J/108; CFTC, "Etude Citroën," ca. 1962, ADIV 111J/236. The La Janais assembly plant was automatizatized to the max to take advantage of this unskilled workforce. Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën," 496-497; Alain Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente en milieu rural, Citroën-Rennes: Une politique de dilution spatiale de la main-d'œuvre" (Masters thesis, Université de Paris I, 1975), 17.

[18] Jean Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais: Un exemple de choix d'implantation industriel, un cas d'impact régional," *Géographie et recherche* 7 (October 1973): 78-79; Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën*, 58-59.

[19] Patrick Le Galès, "Economic Regeneration in Rennes: Local Social Dynamics and State Support," in *Leadership and Urban Regeneration: Cities in North America and Europe*, ed. Denis Judd and Michael Parkinson (London: Sage, 1990), 70; Patrick Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local: Une comparaison franco-britannique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993), 293; Jean Meyer, *Histoire de Rennes* (Toulouse: Privat, 1972), 445-446; Michel Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie, changer la ville* (Rennes: Editions Breizh, 1977), 49, 52-55; Yann Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne: La région et l'État (1950-2000)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), 186-187; Henri Fréville, *Un acte de foi: Trente ans au service de la Cité* (Rennes: Éditions Sepes, 1977), 21-23, 58.

This Breton boosterism was just getting off the ground in 1950, and Rennes officials actually had little to do with Bercot's decision to head west, which he mostly negotiated with ministerial officials in Paris. Citroën's president was above all interested in Breton conservatism. The MRU's Pierre Randet asked a company executive why he chose Rennes. "On y vote MRP, me répondit l'administrateur, façon de dire qu'il comptait trouver aux environs de cette ville une main-d'œuvre d'origine rurale abondante."[20]

Nonetheless, Citroën's decision did depend on one early manifestation of Rennes' nascent development effort: its new industrial park. The initiative of Jules Prod'homme, at the Chamber of Commerce, the industrial park initially had a limited goal: to move Rennes manufacturers out of the city's center. It only became a weapon for inter-urban competition when Citroën began prospecting provincial sites. Subsidized land soon became a common municipal giveaway, but in the early 1950s it was still a rare commodity; indeed, Rennes claimed its park was one of the first in France, and it was enough to beat out other pretenders for the auto works. The industrial park also initiated the Breton community to the cost of competing for industry. Citroën demanded a list of expensive modifications that the park's other users, mainly local manufacturers, would have to pay. Understandably, as an MRU official later wrote, it took "toute l'autorité du Préfet Bendetti pour faire accepter par la Chambre de Commerce la faveur faite à l'entreprise automobile."[21] The industrial park ran into cost overruns that created a vicious circle of budget headaches for the Chamber of Commerce, Rennes city hall, and the MRU, each of whom had provided financial backing for the project. In the end, Citroën escaped the land and credit problems it faced in Paris by pushing them off onto public authorities.[22]

Other Citroën executives were skeptical of Bercot's western strategy. Citroën's president was convinced that the low wages of his native region would compensate the added transportation costs of leaving France's industrial heartland, but Breton labor still

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[20] Randet, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 64. Other accounts suggest that Randet helped push Rennes: "La zone industrielle de Rennes et la succursale Citroën," 21-22 February 1953, ADIV 111J/236; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 39.

[21] Randet, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 64; Henriette Granier, "La Zone industrielle de la route de Lorient" (masters thesis, Université de Rennes, 1967), 49-50.

[22] Noémie Thépot, "La Chambre de Commerce de Rennes de 1945 à 1974" (masters thesis, Université Paris X, 1995), 84-104; Granier, "La Zone industrielle"; Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 56.

suffered from a negative reputation and Rennes seemed like the end of the world to most Paris manufacturers.[23] A number of Bercot's colleagues thus preferred an industrial town closer to Paris, such as Reims, Amiens, or even a site in the northeast manufacturing belt. The outcome of these deliberations was that the rubber-work plant announced in 1951, "la Barre-Thomas," was kept small and used as an experiment. Within a handful of years, however, Bercot declared the factory a success. It had proven the "aptitudes de la main-d'œuvre bretonne au travail industriel." Breton workers were as productive as anyone at standardized tasks, were less expensive, and judging by the overwhelming number of job applicants received by Citroën, they were indeed desperate for work.[24] Meanwhile, company experts undertook studies suggesting that the labor savings at the Barre-Thomas more than made up for transportation costs.[25]

The experiment allowed Pierre Bercot to impose Rennes as the site of Citroën's next factory, which this time would be a major assembly plant. The comparison of the two decentralizations shows how quickly both corporate and government strategies had shifted in a handful of years. The new negotiations stretched out from 1955 to 1959. Bercot's choice of Rennes in 1951 had been remarkably straightforward, but five years later company experts created a mathematical system for comparing potential sites across the nation—a more perfect manipulation of land and labor costs across regions. The business press hailed this new "recherche opérationnelle," which was "appelée sans doute à faire école" in French industry.[26] On the other hand, the experts' study simply confirmed what Bercot and government planners already knew: Rennes was the urban gateway to France's largest army of reserve labor.

Provincial boosterism and government subsidies had progressed even more dramatically since 1951. Citroën's arrival served as a catalyst for the entrepreneurial

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[23] Minutes of the BEI, 13 June 1960, ADIV 30J/108.

[24] Henri Fréville summarizing the findings to Kervran, 27 September 1960, ADIV 52J/105. See also Note to prefect, "La situation à l'usine Citroën de Rennes," 24 June 1954, ADIV 511W/ 164; Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën," 495. Pierre Bercot explitictly labeled the Barre-Thomas an "experimentation," cited in Harismendy, "L'Automobile: du bocage à la ville," 330-331.

[25] Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën*, 58; James C. Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile en France: Une étude de géographie industrielle et d'aménagement du territoire" (doctoral thesis, Université de Paris, 1974), 64.

[26] "Démarrage industriel de la Bretagne?" undated and unidentified newspaper clipping, ADIV 30J/118; Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 220-221.

initiatives of Breton elites. Henri Fréville wrote in his memoirs that the problems raised by Citroën's arrival

> firent ressortir à quel point nous étions démunis de moyens techniques, d'informations économiques suffisantes, de relations solides avec les milieux intéressés dans tous les domaines. Je dus personnellement, entre 1953 et 1962, m'initier à de nouvelles études, à de nouvelles connaissances et me constituer un clavier de relations parfaitement indispensables.[27]

The new auto plants also comforted those in the CELIB who favored a policy of aggressive industrialization, and attuned the coalition's leaders to the importance of canvassing Parisian manufacturers and providing new services for their arrival in Brittany.[28]

The proof of Rennes' new efforts came in 1955, when Citroën began making plans for its second decentralization. This time Breton officials were directly involved in lobbying to nab the new factory for Rennes. In 1955, the CELIB's Secretary General, Joseph Martray, got wind of Citroën's projects through a new network of Breton businessmen. He set up a lunch between Bercot and the CELIB's president, René Pleven, to hammer out a gentlemen's agreement that the factory would be built in Rennes. Martray himself swept in for dessert to lay out the particulars on subsidies, housing, and the like.[29]

Over the next half-decade, national, regional, and local officials worked together to put together a major aid package, often mobilizing close personal relationships that cut across the ranks of politics and bureaucracy.[30] State incentives had grown rapidly. In 1951, Rennes beat out cities closer to Paris thanks solely to its cheap land and labor. In the space of just a few years, however, these two assets became ubiquitous in provincial towns' development portfolios—prerequisites for entering the competition for Parisian industry, but not enough to nab a factory. Likewise, during its first decentralization

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[27] Fréville, *Un acte de foi*, 329.

[28] Of which the culminations were the creation of a "Bureau d'études industrielles" to prospect and install outside manufacturers, and the publication of the Michel Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités d'implantations industrielles en Bretagne* (Rennes: CELIB, 1956).

[29] Erwan Chartier, "Citroën en Bretagne," *Ar Men* 119 (March 2001): 5.

[30] Relationships proved crucial. Pleven, Fréville, and the CELIB used their networks to obtain state aid for the Rennes project. Fréville had attended an elite preparatory school with the Construction Ministry's head of *aménagement du territoire*, Pierre Randet; he and Pleven were both close to Claudius-Petit. Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 70-71; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 45-56; Fréville, *Un acte de foi*, 328.

Citroën received no public subsidies or tax incentives, for the simple reason that they did not yet exist. For its second plant, however, the automaker benefited from one of the most generous direct capital subsidies the government doled out for industrial decentralization.[31]

Free infrastructure and social overhead are generally less controversial than direct subsidies, since they appear to benefit the entire community, but they often cost far more.[32] That was the case in Rennes. Together, the municipality and the state administration furnished much of the town improvements needed to accommodate a major auto factory. They increased the construction of subsidized housing by hundreds of extra units per year.[33] They built a ring-road around southern Rennes and connected the Citroën factory to it. Last but not least, they worked to feed the factory's insatiable appetite for water.[34] Rennes spent 395 million francs on this water delivery alone, despite the fact that the national administration picked up 40 percent of the bill.[35] An older generation of local politicians was flabbergasted by the sums being doled out for Brittany's newest employer.[36]

Rennes did not have the land to accommodate Citroën's vast assembly plant, so the company chose a site in the neighboring town of Chartres de Bretagne, home to 1,000 residents.[37] Then it began what was to become a ritual of postwar decentralization. Quai

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[31] Loubet speaks of 23,000 francs per job created at Rennes, which is "l'une des plus importantes contributions jamais faites aux entreprises automobiles." Loubet, *Citroën, Peugeot, Renault et les autres*, 78. Caro claims that between 1959 and 1963 alone, Citroën received more than 7 billion francs in decentralization subsidies—a quarter of all its new investments during the period. Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 43-44. See also Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 72-74; Le Boudec, "Citroën-Rennes," 39-42.

[32] James M. Rubenstein, *The Changing U.S: Auto Industry: A Geographical Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 214.

[33] Pierre Bercot to Henri Fréville, 10 September 1960, ADIV 52J/105. Rennes and the Ministry of Construction undertook this added housing construction despite the automaker's refusal to relinquish part of its obligatory housing expenditures—the "1% patronal"—to this public program. See below.

[34] Rennes also allowed the automaker to divert water supply from the city's residents. Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 78-85, 87-90; Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 78. By contrast, the state initially reneged on its promise to build a highway between Rennes and Le Mans. On the local transportation problems raised by Citroën Rennes, see minutes of the Comité directeur du BEI, 13 June 1960, ADIV 30J/108; Clavel of Citroën to Henri Fréville, 5 April 1961, ADIV 52J/195. The state built ring-roads for auto factories decentralizing to other towns like Caen, Reims, and La Rochelle. Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 489.

[35] "M. Raymond Ravenel au 20ème anniversaire de Citroën," *Ouest-France* 29-30 September 1973, ADIV

[36] Interview with Antoine Chatel, 7/1/2009.

[37] Chartres de Bretagne passed from less than one thousand residents to six thousand. Philippe Bonnin, mayor of Chartres, interview with Erwan Chartier, 12/22/2000.

de Javel secretly drew up plans for the factory with the help of the prefectoral administration. Once all the details were in place, the prefect and Citroën executives descended upon the unwitting community to drive their program through. In July 1958, six black sedans pulled up to the house of Chartres' newly elected mayor, Antoine Chatel, and laid out their project. All the dumbfounded mayor had to do was agree, push a new urban plan through the municipal council, and convince local residents to sell their land at a "fair" price. Chatel spent the next three months organizing the land purchases, chewing the fat with local farmers and smoothing over the move of elderly residents. With the young mayor's help, Citroën assembled a production site of 160 hectares (about 400 acres)—bigger than Paris' entire fourth arrondissement—and another 140 ha (345 acres) of room to expand. Quai de Javel brandished its new "La Janais" plant as one of the largest production sites in Europe.[38]

The factory was a windfall for Chartres de Bretagne. Indeed, it proved so lucrative that it sparked a national debate over France's new municipal entrepreneurialism. The Chartres municipal council initially gave the automaker a 50 percent reduction on its local business tax—the maximum allowed by the law—but then promptly hiked the tax rate five-fold. By 1962 the small town's revenues had increased six-fold, nearly all of which was now paid by its new employer. An infuriated Pierre Bercot took the municipality to court in a lengthy proceeding meant to establish a general jurisprudence for industrial decentralization in France. Could towns that had nabbed a captive industry then use it as their "cash cow"? Could cities even bank a profit to be used for future development programs, as Chartres was trying to do? The government's *commissaire* ruled against Antoine Chatel. Such stratagems were "incompatible[s] avec

[38] Chatel was just 27 years old when Citroën arrived. He says he and the municipal council were "assommés"—forced to make a decision immediately on these pre-established plans, with no time for deliberation. Interview with Antoine Chatel, 7/1/2009; Michel Angola, "Citroën à Chartres-de-Bretagne," in *Chartres-de-Bretagne* (Paris: Maury, 1996). Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 80-81; Chartier, "Citroën en Bretagne," 8. For a description of the similar descent of Japanese auto executives on Midwestern U.S. communities, see Rubenstein, *The Changing U.S. Auto Industry*, 201-202.

l'esprit des mesures destinées à favoriser la décentralisation industrielle."[39] Nonetheless, even at a reduced rate, La Janais continued to provide the bulk of Chartres' budget.[40]

Antoine Chatel refused to share Chartres' tax bonanza with neighboring Rennes. His stance highlighted a common problem with postwar industrialization: municipal boundaries often separated the social charges and the fiscal rewards generated by new factories. Henri Fréville had fought for Citroën's arrival, and Rennes' taxpayers were footing much of the bill for the water, roads, and social housing that La Janais required. Chartres de Bretagne, on the other hand, had unwittingly benefited from a well situated piece of land, and the town now reaped a business tax some 35 times greater per capita than its neighbor. This blatant inequality was only corrected in the 1970s, when the state prefect forced Chartres into a newly created metropolitan entity, the "Rennes District," to redistribute part of its fiscal wealth. In the meantime, Antoine Chatel had turned his rural commune into a middle-class suburb, stocked with all the amenities Citroën's money could buy—a strategy that assured his four-decade mayoral reign.[41]

La Janais vividly ushered in the new era of state aid to industry in the name of regional development. During the rest of his presidency, Pierre Bercot followed the trail of cheap labor and public subsidies with unparalleled determination. The other French auto constructers generally tried to organize their decentralized production on a coherent geographic basis; Bercot, on the other hand, was ready to go wherever the local payoff was the most advantageous.[42] In Rennes, some resented the red carpet rolled out for Citroën, but most city officials viewed this public assistance as a profitable investment. The modern car factories not only brought jobs, but also established Brittany's

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[39] In words of a *Ouest France* article, cited in Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 99. See the dossier of letters between Citroën, the prefect, and the Interior Ministry in ADIV 511W/164. I have cited: Pierre Bercot to Prefect A. Stirn, 11/16/1962; "L'Affaire Citroën-préfet d'Ille-et-Vilaine," *Ouest-France*, 6/25/1964, ADIV 511W/164.

[40] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 108.

[41] Against its will, Chartre-de-Bretagne was ultimately integrated into a new "District de Rennes" in 1977 and forced to share its business tax with this broader metropolitan entity. Citroën thus became the biggest provider of business tax to the capital. Interview with Antoine Chatel, 7/1/2009; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 172-173; Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 354; Chartier, "Citroën en Bretagne," 8. The District only got a fully common *taxe professionnelle* in 1992, however. Pascal Ory, "Naissance d'une métropole," in *Histoire de Rennes*, ed. Gauthier Aubert, et al. (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2006), 269.

[42] SIMCA stubbornly clung to Paris and Peugeot to its hometown, Sochaux. Renault did more decentralization, but tried to locate its biggest factories along the Seine River axis. Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 78; Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 361-362.

"credibility" as a new industrial center.[43] They were an unbeatable marketing tool, showcased in the CELIB's advertisements, promotional videos, and prepackaged tours for outside businessmen.[44] Government officials in Paris were equally grateful: Citroën-Rennes gave an unprecedented boost to *aménagement du territoire*.[45]

For this invaluable asset, state and local officials were willing to pay up. Government officials in Paris continued to treat Quai de Javel generously, approving further subsidies and new construction in the Paris region. But public concessions could not be measured in monetary terms alone. With the reputation of Brittany and decentralization policy on the line, public authorities became deeply invested in making sure La Janais' opening was a profitable one.

Urban Industry and Garden Living

If Citroën's factories needed to stay close to Rennes, officials hoped its workers would live in the countryside and drive to the factory. Workers' commutes would be the foundation for a new symbiosis between the regional capital and its rural hinterland, in which Rennes focused on building up metropolitan amenities while the surrounding region captured demographic growth.[46] If this program resembled the agrarian planning ideals invented in the Vichy years, it was because the goal of creating dynamic industrial centers while keeping workers out of the city had lost none of its pertinence in the midst of the Trente Glorieuses. Citroën hoped to profit from the subsistence consumption of the countryside and use "pluriactivity" to ensure that former peasants identified with a rural community, not an industrial working class. Breton elites praised this maintenance of rural roots all the more easily since it removed a potential source of pressure from

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[43] On the investment in a first factory to build a town's national "credibility," see Rubenstein, *The Changing U.S. Auto Industry*, 230.

[44] The the vast factory was the best proof for potential investors "que la Bretagne était en train de s'industrialiser à un rythme extrêmement rapide," as CELIB specialists noted. Minutes of the Comité directeur du Bureau d'études industrielles, 18 July 1960, see also 13 June 1960, ADIV 30J/108. Among the CELIB advertisements featuring Citroën: the film "La Bretagne vue du ciel," 1963, ADIV 30J/96, and 1963 articles in *Usine nouvelle* and other magazines, minutes of 17 June 1963, ADIV 30J/122.

[45] DIME, "Note pour M. le Ministre: Aide aux investissements decentralisés de Citroën," undated, CAC 19900583/9. For a similar evaluation justifying favorable state treatment of Citroën, for its pioneering decentralization, see Comité interministeriel sur la Région parisienne, "Note sur l'implantation," 1964, and minutes of the CARP, 2 December 1963, CAC 19770814/2.

[46] This ideal is analagous to the "industrial garden" vision described by Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 8, 34.

Rennes' already fantastic development. And most Citroën workers aspired to either keep a small family farm or accede to suburban homeownership.

By the early 1950s, this project of mixing postwar modernization with agrarian roots had a new guiding exemplar: the United States. Postwar trends confirmed that American industry was decentralizing, as northeastern manufacturers headed South and West in search of rural labor pools, expanding markets, and government incentives. This national movement of capital created just the kind of local deconcentration by envisioned French planners. Urban workers in the U.S. were increasingly moving to the suburbs and a substantial fraction of America's farming families now shuttled between the land and the factory.[47]

For decentralizers in the Hexagon, these U.S. trends proved that French peasants were not a backwards race, but rather the perfect subjects for a new industrial setup. The founding father of French regional policy, Jean-François Gravier, wrote that the social model he had invented under Vichy was "verified" by the evolution across the Atlantic. His agrarian ideal found a clear echo in assessments such as this one, which an American electronics manufacturer sent to the Harvard Business School:

> Nous pensons que les gens qui vivent chez eux, qui se rendent à pied à leur travail, qui peuvent chasser, pêcher, cultiver leur jardin comme ils le souhaitent, ont d'appréciables avantages physiques, psychologiques et économiques.[48]

Breton boosters echoed Gravier's infatuation for the U.S. The American South in particular provided a blueprint for the French West, a rural region seeking to draw investors away from the nation's manufacturing belt.[49]

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[47] For examples of rural U.S. industrialization as middle-class suburbia and as a mixed farm-factory model, see respectively Ibid; James Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936-1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 112-113. De Calan claimed that 68 percent of all agricultural production in the U.S. was done by such part-timers. De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the prefecture, December 1969, p 2, ADIV 52J/105.

[48] Indeed, Gravier wrote that the best way to plan for future industrialization trends was to "tirer les enseignements des tendances de l'emploi enregistrées dans l'économie industrielle la plus 'efficiente' et la plus 'progressive' que nous ayons sous les yeux. C'est pourquoi l'évolution constatée aux États-Unis doit retenir particulièrement l'attention, d'autant mieux qu'elle confirme et prolonge, dans l'ensemble, celle que nous connaissons en France." Gravier, *Décentralisation et progrès technique*, 187, 213-215, 321.

[49] The CELIB's president, René Pleven, found the American example "tout à fait frappant." Comité d'étude et de liaison des intérêts bretons, *Rapport d'ensemble sur un plan d'aménagement, de modernisation et d'équipement de la Bretagne, 1954-1958* (Paris: Imprimerie la Mouette, 1953), 71. The coalition's foremost industrial expert, Michel Phlipponneau, likewise argued in 1956: "L'exemple américain montre

Perhaps most importantly, the longstanding director of the La Janais factory, Philippe de Calan, viewed Breton peasants as nothing less than "des Américains potentiels."[50] The U.S. showed that keeping workers in the countryside served two corporate goals. First, it undercut the wages and collective power of an urban working class. De Calan was explicit about the idea that factory wages should only be part of a worker's income—perhaps only a supplementary part of it. He told Brittany's prefect in 1966:

> Parmi les ouvriers de l'usine ce sont ceux qui ont gardé leur attache rurale...qui sont les plus nets bénéficiaires de l'implantation de l'industrie automobile dans la région rennaise. Ayant déjà leur logement, leur nourriture ou tout-au-moins une partie de celle-ci assurée, le salaire de l'usine devient pour ces derniers un 'appoint' véritable.

A rural residency also promised social stability. Keeping workers in the countryside, De Calan explained, ensured "la 'non-cassure' d'un mode de vie, le maintien d'un cadre familial, municipal et religieux."[51] Dispersion also avoided the political promiscuity of blue-collar neighborhoods and urban housing estates, "où il est si facile de créer une cellule communiste."[52]

De Calan viewed rural living as a broader project than just ensuring low wages and weak unions, however. It was also a response to the social dilemmas created by the Fordist factory. Despite the relatively good pay, job security, and benefits of auto work, a growing number of French men and women refused the hardships of the assembly line. The worker contestation of 1968 forced this problem into the public spotlight, turning "le

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que les industries caractéristiques de la nouvelle civilisation technique, à la différence de celles qui au XIXème siècle ont déterminé un gigantisme urbain, tendent à s'établir dans des zones rurales à main-d'œuvre excédentaire." Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*. Phlipponneau was pushed into in his pioneering regional development work by his travels abroad and his study of foreign models as a young university geographer. He was generally impressed by the much greater resources available for industrial location policies abroad in places like Great Britain, Belgium, and the United States, and studied the situation in Connecticut, American business schools, and Chicago's development office. Solène Gaudin, "Le Parcours d'un géographe: Michel Phlipponneau" (masters thesis, Université Rennes 2, 2003), 19-22, 85-89. For a media version of this trope of La Janais as the fulfillment of an American tendency, see "Usine Citroën de Rennes La-Janais. Numéro spécial," *L'Ouest industriel* 15, no. 164, (July 1965), 72. Civic leaders in other regions similarly took the U.S. as a model for industrial decentralization. See for example the statement by the president of the CCI of Vienne, "Paris? Province? Ou la France?" *Effort* June 1963, CAC 19770788/9.

[50] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 7.

[51] De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, p. 6, ADIV 511W/164.

[52] Citroën to Préfet de région, 30/11/1967, ADIV 511W164.

problème de l'OS" into a pressing industrial and political concern. However, the disaffection for low-skill industrial jobs existed far earlier, as evidenced by the perennial labor shortages and high turnover rates in French industry. Auto manufacturers promised reforms, but in reality they mostly increased their recruitment of foreign immigrants, a less demanding workforce.[53] That was particularly true in Citroën's Paris region factories, where over 60 percent of workers were of foreign origin, including a whopping three-quarters on the Javel assembly line.[54] De Calan denounced French industry's reliance on foreigners, but he saw little hope for improving conditions in the factory enough to change the underlying cause of this predicament: an industry increasingly based on repetitive, standardized tasks would never offer the majority of its employees interesting work or a promotion that got them off the factory line.[55]

On the other hand, De Calan believed that decentralization, offered "une solution partielle au problème de l'O.S."[56] First, rural France offered a less demanding labor pool than in Paris. A range of observers viewed rural Frenchmen as analogous to foreign immigrants, for good reason. As former peasants, often with little secondary education and few job options at home, they were more willing to accept the hardest jobs, least pay, and worst prospects for future promotion that French industry had to offer.[57] Decentralizing production to rural France was therefore commonly presented as an alternative to opening France's borders to greater immigration.[58] As La Janais' early recruitment difficulties would show, however, even poor provincials hesitated to accept a life on the factory line. De Calan thus took seriously the second promise of rural industrialization: that more Frenchmen would accept a tough life of industrial work if

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[53] Nicolas Hatzfeld, "Les ouvriers de l'automobile. Des vitrines sociales à la condition des OS, le changement des regards," in *Les années 68: Le temps de la contestation*, ed. Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, et al. (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2000), 357-361; Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 357-358; Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française*, 236.
[54] Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 123; Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 479-481.
[55] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 18.
[56] Ibid.: 18-19.
[57] Guenhaël Jégouzo, *Exode agricole et offre régionale d'emplois* (Paris: Éditions Cujas, 1973), 188. Moreover, French auto companies sent recruiters to the rural West as they did in North Africa. Renault event sent a recruitment team to Brittany, as it did for North African migrants. (According to an interview with a former INSEE director in Brittany interviewed by Erwan Chartier on 12/19/2000). SIMCA spoke of its Moroccan workers as men who "combinent la vie industrielle et agricole," a formula that cannot help but evoke Citroën's peasants in Rennes. Cited in Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 352.
[58] See for example Conseil Economique et Social, *Étude sur une politique des économies régionales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 11; François Essig, *En marche pour le XXIe siècle: Souvenirs d'un témoin engagé* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), 76-77.

they were compensated by better housing and generous time off. The only durable solution to the problem of the working class was to turn "la civilisation industrielle" into "une civilisation des loisirs."[59]

For De Calan, this Fordist leisure society could only be rural. In big cities, workers lost their time in commuting and were unable to "fuir le béton, l'étouffement et retrouver calme et verdure." Above all, the urban worker could not choose his housing. Even more than the traditional urban slum, or *taudis*, it was the postwar social housing estate that provoked De Calan's ire. He saw the concrete high-rises that dominated France's program of "HLMs" (*habitations à loyer modéré*) as symbols of the individual's alienation. As such, De Calan believed the opportunity to keep a small farm or buy a suburban home was on its own worth an entire life spent working on the production line. "Aussi paradoxal que cela puisse paraître," he wrote, "un 'O.S.' ayant sa maison individuelle et une occupation rurale peut avoir la vie plus large, et tout compte fait, plus intéressante que le 'professionnel' quand il vit en HLM."[60]

According to the Citroën director's ideal, some peasants would retain a truly rural lifestyle, keeping small farms of up to 5 or 6 ha (12-15 acres). A dozen acres were just enough for agriculture to provide for subsistence consumption and become a relaxing "hobby"—an American concept De Calan liked so much that he said it in English. Other employees would move closer to the suburbanite model, owning a new home and garden.[61] Whatever form it took, garden living would give workers "un maximum de liberté" outside the factory, the necessary antidote to the grueling constraints of the assembly line.[62] De Calan called this "une solution américaine" to the problem of the French working class: the humanization of Fordist work, which all admitted was necessary, could be displaced from reforms in the factory to the terrain of everyday life.

The rural dispersion of workers was not just a corporate strategy. It also dovetailed with the desires of Rennes and Brittany's civic elites. Most of them hoped to preserve the region's distinctively decentralized development pattern, with its dense rural

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[59] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 19.
[60] Ibid.
[61] De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the prefecture, December 1969, p 2, ADIV 52J/105; Ibid.: 18.
[62] De Calan to Sous-préfet Larvaron, 2/15/1973, ADIV 511W/166.

population, vibrant network of small towns, and lack of major urban centers.[63] As a result, progrowth leaders such as the CELIB's industrial expert, Michel Phlipponneau, saw no contradiction between promoting modern industry and denouncing urban concentration in a language that hearkened back to the 1930s and 1940s. Phlipponneau warned against the urban gigantism of Rennes.[64] Certainly, the Breton capital was no megalopolis; it boasted just 120,000 residents in the early 1950s. But it had one of the highest growth rates in France, which risked being accelerated by Henri Fréville's project of turning Rennes into a "growth pole" for the entire region. The city's 1965 plan projected some 350,000 future residents.[65]

By the early 1960s, promoters of a more decentralized development pattern had adapted Gravier's slogan of "Paris et le désert français" to denounce the emergence of "Rennes et le désert breton." The parallel between France's global city and Brittany's modest capital was less gratuitous than it might seem. As Rennes absorbed a rapid increase in jobs and population, it risked reproducing on a regional scale the very problems of uneven development that national decentralization was meant to solve: uprooting peasants, creating a new urban working class, aggravating the growing pains of urbanization, and generating labor shortages that could ultimately force Rennes' manufacturers to import immigrant workers—an unwanted prospect in this immigrant-free region.[66]

Keeping new auto workers in the countryside served various political goals. First and foremost, it took pressure off Rennes' dilapidated housing stock. Decades of neglect and wartime destruction had left the Breton capital with one of the nation's worst housing shortages and highest rates of urban slums. In 1956, the CELIB recognized that this

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[63] Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 9-12; Joseph Martray, *Vingt ans qui transformèrent la Bretagne: L'épopée du CELIB* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1983), 217.
[64] Gaudin, "Le Parcours d'un géographe," 76, 143-144.
[65] Phlipponneau contended that Fréville's "growth pole" endeavor failed, precisely due to the suburbanization of industry and population. Nonetheless, this progrowth agenda allowed Fréville to join the ranks of postwar France's most powerful, "presidential" mayors, despite the fact that government planners had not chosen Rennes as an official *métropole d'équilibree*. Meyer, *Histoire de Rennes*, 448-449; Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 52-59, 67; Le Galès, "Economic Regeneration in Rennes," 70-71; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 149-164.
[66] For instance, the president of Rennes' Chamber of Commerce, Jules Prud'homme, reiterated, "il faut éviter de faire de Rennes ce qu'on a fait à Paris." Minutes of the BEI, 28 March 1960, ADIV 30J/108. See also Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 50-51, 55.

housing crisis was a "goulot d'étranglement" for attracting new industry to the region.[67] Here, again, Breton boosters were rediscovering a problem highlighted in the Vichy studies: they counted on the Paris region's severe housing shortage to push manufacturers and workers out to the provinces, but France's housing crisis was a national, not just a Parisian, problem.[68] Henri Fréville responded with an ambitious program of subsidized housing, but it would not suffice in the case of an influx of Citroën workers in search of affordable accommodation. Moreover, HLMs weighed heavily on state and municipal budgets, and they created an urban landscape that held little appeal for workers and city elites alike. For Michel Phlipponneau and others at the CELIB, there was only one viable solution: "Une grande partie de la main-d'œuvre d'origine rurale devrait continuer à résider à la campagne,"' Phlipponneau wrote in a 1956 planning document.[69]

There were other reasons that Rennes elites were happy to see Citroën's workers stay out of the city. First of all, it freed up space for Rennes' role as a high-tech metropolis. Henri Fréville recognized that Rennes' metropolitan vocation was not in housing working-class migrants, but rather in concentrating higher education, research, communications, high-tech industries, and the well-educated elites who performed these tasks.[70] Keeping workers out of the city had political as well as economic merits. The traditionally small size of Rennes' working-class population underpinned the centrist reign in city politics. With Citroën, the Breton capital got an industrial base while remaining a middle-class city.[71] Finally, as in other provincial towns, the main source of

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[67] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 67.

[68] For other automakers' discovery of this housing paradox, see Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 160-163.

[69] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 67.

[70] Fréville began to worry about Rennes becoming a "ghetto pour les travailleurs" after the 1973 elections saw Socialists win races for *conseillers généraux* in several blue-collar HLMs built in part to accommodate Citroën. Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 54, 72, 169. See also Meyer, *Histoire de Rennes*, 457; Fréville, *Un acte de foi*, 350, 360. Despite a Left union takeover of city hall in 1977, though, municipal politics remained dominated by "des classes moyennes du secteur public" pursuing policies oriented to the high-skill economy of a middle-class city and allowing "the trend toward marginalization and exclusion of working-class people." That provoked the anger of the PCF and CGT, who remained too weak to influence Rennes politics despite the vast auto factory at city's gates.Le Galès, "Economic Regeneration in Rennes," 84-85; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 203-212.

[71] A Citroën promotional video on La Janais dramatized how the possibility of a big factory had created "[d]eux clans" in the city: forward-looking modernizers and "[l]es 'contre' qui redoutaient la prolétarisation de leur ville bien pensante, ayant voté MRP, et bourgeoisement habitée." Fréville "faisait figure de traitre à son Parti"—the Christian Democratic MRP—by promoting industrialization and "arrachant au Conseil Municipal des subventions" for the city improvements Citroën required. "Projet de film," ADIV 52J/105.

opposition to the automaker's arrival had been local manufacturers who feared labor competition. By recruiting in the countryside, not in Rennes, Citroën avoided this potential source of conflict.[72]

Moreover, keeping workers in the countryside shored up support for the very principle of further industrialization in Rennes, which was straining relationships with national and regional officials. Early decentralization to Brittany was overwhelmingly concentrated near its capital. As of 1962, the Ille-et-Vilaine department had received a full 95 percent of the new jobs created in the region by Parisian manufacturers. This polarization was a major source of tension in the CELIB and challenged the government's willingness to continue funding new development in the east of the region.[73] These tensions were underscored by the fight that emerged over the state subsidy for Citroën's second factory. The Finance Ministry resisted the idea of according its most generous subsidy, the *prime spéciale d'équipement* (PSE), for another factory in Rennes. The PSE was reserved for France's worst-off towns, which the Breton capital certainly was not; it now had one of the highest growth rates in France. And many regional politicians feared that the new auto plant would only further skew development efforts in Rennes's favor. They were right: as of May 1962, Citroën-Rennes alone had received 38 of the 47 million francs in government subsidies accorded to Brittany.[74]

But Henri Fréville and the CELIB's leaders argued that the subsidy was justified by a "growth pole" logic. Since Citroën was committed to recruiting a dispersed workforce, its new factory would provide jobs not for Rennes, but for its rural hinterland, which was one of the poorest in the nation. In the end, the government's approval of the subsidy owed less to this debate over principles than to corporate blackmail. When Finance Ministry tried to deny the PSE in 1958, Citroën threatened to pull out of its new plant, whose construction had already begun. That sent a panicked group of political

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[72] Granier, "La Zone industrielle," 258-259.

[73] Representatives of peripheral departments became increasingly impatient to see growth spread west, creating a major fracture within the CELIB coalition. Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 158. As of the end of 1959, Rennes had received 1.65 billion of the 1.73 billion francs in state subsidied doled out to Brittany's seven *zones critiques* Thépot, "La Chambre de Commerce de Rennes," 20. On Rennes' polarization of growth and the conflicts it raised, see Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 48-49, 59-61; Granier, "La Zone industrielle," 19-25; Fournis, *Les Régionalismes en Bretagne*, 183-185, 190-191; Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 145-146.

[74] The next biggest payout was 750,000 francs, to the Société Eternit. "Réalisations industrielles en Bretagne," ADIV 99W/288.

bigwigs rushing to Paris, where they finally got the subsidy approved.[75] Nonetheless, a dispersed workforce did help spread the wealth generated by Rennes' industrialization. La Janais' recruitment basin stretched into neighboring departments, covering some of Brittany's most depressed rural communities. Citroën was a potential bonanza for these small towns and villages. Auto jobs for local residents and the arrival of workers in new suburban housing developments promised to reverse demographic decline, revive municipal finances, and trigger an influx of money to local developers and shops.[76]

In sum, garden living was as much a response to practical problems as a matter of reformist ideology. However, it became increasingly clear that recruiting thousands of new workers while keeping them rural required an ambitious program of social engineering and region building. And this effort raised a central debate about what kind of relationship a national corporation should have with the local community.

Postwar decentralization was based on a founding myth: that Fordist branch plants were free from the ties of territory. The standardization of production promised a vast supply of "ubiquitous" labor, and thus a hands-off recruitment. The postwar state freed employers from earlier responsibilities to provide for workers' housing and welfare. And new regional development programs would deliver the standardized bundle of infrastructure that a factory needed. All Paris headquarters had to do was send down production orders to their decentralized managers.[77] This myth of a footloose Fordism,

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[75] Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 71-75, 86-87. On the broader debate about Rennes' designation as a *zone critique*, see the Groupe de synthèse minutes on the PAR for Brittany, 22 March 1956, CAC 19930278/19.

[76] The geographer Pierre Flatrès wrote that the rural area of eastern Brittany where Citroën recruited was "peut-être la plus déshéritée de Bretagne, la seule où l'on puisse voir les ruines de villages abandonnés." With auto workers' installation, however, "Toute cette zone est...parsemée de pavillons neufs des 'Citroën' tandis que les bourgs s'entourent de lotissements, que le commerce se modernise et que des établissements scolaires secondaires se développent." Pierre Flatrès, *La Bretagne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1986), 95. The masters student Alain Picart nuanced this vision of Citroën reviving rural communes: since Citroën's modest salaries forced many workers to delay homeownership, the boost to the rural construction industry was less than initially expected, and their purchases increasingly went to new supermarkets rather than traditional shops in rural villages. Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 100-108. For early promises of new suburban revival thanks to Citroën, see "La Bretagne et la décentralisation industrielle. Compte rendu des Journées régionales d'étude et d'information économique, Rennes, 9 et 10 décembre 1960," p. 42, ADIV BA IND 18; "Ville et campagne face au 'fait Citroën,'" *Ouest-France*, undated clipping ca. 1960, ADIV 30J/118.

[77] On Citroën-Rennes' changing relationship to "territory"—local particularity and place-bound forms of cooperation—see Yann Fournis, "Les nouveaux territoires de l'industrie automobile: Citroën à Rennes," in *Bretagne plurielle: Culture, territoire et politique*, ed. Nathalie Dugalès, Yann Fournis, and Tudi Kernalegenn (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007). Fournis argues that before 1975, Citroën-

easily piloted from distant headquarters, was invented in the 1940s with a specific goal in mind: to reassure Parisian manufacturers that they could decentralize production without getting trapped in traditional paternalist commitments. In the capital, responsibility for workers' transportation, housing, and welfare had long been socialized. If industrialists were happy to flee the Paris region's labor power, they did not want to lose the autonomy and anonymity it offered employers.

Parisian manufacturers had a clear foil: the company-town setup that had traditionally emerged when a manufacturer became the dominant employer in a provincial city. In this regard, Pierre Bercot had two negative models right under his nose. His boss, Michelin, had created a classic company town in Clermont-Ferrand. And Citroën's main provincial competitor, Peugeot, had turned the city of Sochaux into "Peugeot-land" with its company stores, schools, and housing. Quai de Javel wanted to avoid the hefty price tag attached to this paternalist model of community-building.[78] That was just fine with officials in Rennes, who had no desire to see their city "Citroën-ized" (*Citroënisée*).[79]

When Pierre Bercot opened La Janais, his orders were clear: Citroën was not to get bogged down in social affairs and regional commitments.[80] But De Calan quickly developed a different view of things. He, too, hoped to avoid the old version of the company town, but he believed that turning peasants into industrial workers and keeping them on the land would require addressing Brittany's particularities and laying down

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Rennes had a weak relationship to territory: the factories formed an "isolat Fordist," directed from Paris and with few local links to other manufacturers or public authorities. This narrative of place-less Fordism hides as much as it explains. La Janais had few local suppliers and kept its industrial strategy autonomous from other Rennes firms, but when it came to labor it could not settle for such a distant approach.

[78] On Peugeot's paternalist system—and its changing nature as union and state officials obtained more oversight of its workings—see Nicolas Hatzfeld, *Les Gens d'usine: 50 ans d'histoire à Peugeot-Sochaux* (Paris: Atelier, 2002), chapter 5, "Expansion de l'usine et recompositions sociales," especially 208-212; Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 351. For a comparison of Billancourt and Peugeot-Sochaux's social engagements in their respective urban regions, see Nicolas Hatzfeld and Laure Pitti, "Usine et ville industrielle: Boulogne-Billancourt et Peugeot-Sochaux, entre face-à-face et échange (1945-1995)," in *La ville sans bornes / La ville et ses bornes*, ed. Danièle Fraboulet and Dominique Rivière (Paris: Nolin, 2006), 31-34.

[79] C*andide reportage*, 22 August 1962; "Ville et campagne face au 'fait Citroën,'" *Ouest-France*, undated clipping ca. 1960, ADIV 30J/118.

[80] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 5-9. De Calan wrote in his memoirs, "Je quitte Paris avec trois consignes: détachez-vous de La Barre-Thomas; ayez le minimum de contacts avec les autorités locales (maire et préfet) pour garder votre liberté d'action; jouez le train; ne vous occupez pas des transports qui sont cause d'ennuis importants."

local roots. In order to recruit, De Calan had to understand rural economies, peasant mentalities, and the needs of village communities. He pleaded for a program of subsidized busing, adapted factory life to farm rhythms, and delivered home loans to shore up rural living. Finally, De Calan created alliances with local leaders. He needed the help of the prefect, Rennes elites, and rural mayors to recruit workers and fight unions. In return, he participated in regional planning, providing reports and representing Citroën on Brittany's regional development commission, or CODER.

De Calan's vision derived in part from his broad sense of social mission, and in part from his confrontation with realities on the ground. The executives at Quai de Javel resented the former, but had to deal with the latter. It soon became clear that if Citroën wanted the peasant labor, subsistence consumption, and farmhouses that made low wages possible, it would have to figure out how to make such a mixed lifestyle work—and subsidized de Calan's new programs.[81]

Pierre Bercot only accepted this reality at the height of La Janais' recruitment problems, but his nomination of De Calan was itself an early recognition that Citroën needed community ties. In effect, the new factory director was a prominent Breton aristocrat, whose family owned several châteaux and the better part of the town of Maxent, in the department of Morbihan. In his youth, De Calan had directly supervised the sharecroppers who worked the family's land. This intimate familiarity with Brittany's elites and peculiar peasantry overrode De Calan's almost total lack of industrial experience: the latter had just recently joined Citroën, upon his retirement from the navy.

With his distinctive aristocratic demeanor—and some of his own tenant farmers working in the factory—De Calan personified the survival of Brittany's traditional social order in the high-tech car plants.[82] Citroën relied on rural elites, from former employers to mayors and even priests, for information on job applicants' "moral" qualities.[83] Inside

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[81] Interviews for Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

[82] Interviews with Joseph Cussonneau interview, 24-28 November 2009; information communicated by Hubert Budor; Ibid.

[83] Renseignements généraux, note du 3 October 1962, ADIV 511 W 164; "Situation sociale et syndicale à Citroën," 1 April 1966, CFDT archives 1B/416. One eighteen-year old wrote to the CFDT: "je suis profondément ennuyé en ce moment…le service d'enquête de Citroën vint contacter M. Villibord [mon ancien patron] bien-entendu. Or celui-ci a dû apprendre que j'étais syndiqué à la laiterie. Et comme l'usine Citroën ne veut rien entendre du syndicat, bien sûr on ma balancé au bout de mes 15 jours d'essai...en ce

the factory, meanwhile, floor managers were generally recruited within the region: they thus knew how to deal with the particularities of the Breton peasantry.[84] At the same time, though, De Calan was no hidebound traditionalist. He pursued his program of social management with scientific rigor. Working with Rennes scholars and planners, he produced detailed studies on local incomes and economic trends in areas of potential recruitment, on the social backgrounds of his workers, and on their residential choices. In fact, De Calan was soon so busy with social and community issues that Pierre Bercot sent down a co-director to handle properly industrial affairs at La Janais.

This dual direction—one for the factory, the other for its regional environment—underscores the extent to which Citroën's project had expanded. Quai de Javel had accepted to move west based on assurances of an abudant rural labor pool and the new ease of establishing a provincial branch plant. But if public authorities largely lived up to their promises of standardized assets, providing the plant with new subsidies and infrastructure, the opening of La Janais showed that Citroën would have to invest in a broader program of engineering rural society. If De Calan embraced this regional project, seeing Citroën's revival of Brittany as a veritable "apostolat."[85] Quai de Javel begrudgingly accepted it for more practical reasons. When the vast assembly plant opened its doors, management was confronted with a twin specter: recruitment shortfalls and a mass exodus of new workers to the city.

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moment je suis sans travail. Essayez d'arranger les choses." 28 April 1965, ADIV 111J/339. A Citroën agent even got caught impersonating a state Labor Inspector trying to get background information on a candidate. "Note sur les problèmes liés à l'exercise du droit syndical à la Société Citroën," undated ca. 1980, ADIV 511W/166.

[84] Alain Boismartel, who worked as a production manager before moving onto human resources, told Hubert Budor: "Y'avait des gens qui venaient de la campagne et qui ne pouvaient pas s'adapter à ce système-là....Et moi un ancien paysan...J'avais un avantage énorme, c'est de connaître les problèmes qu'ils avaient." Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*. A leftist *établi* was surprised to discover how much the social codes of rural masculinity carried over into relationships of authority in the factory. La Janais' management was "parfois étonamment tolérante" versus rural workers' outlashes against their superiors, "voire même donne satisfaction à celui qui gueule le plus fort." He concluded, "c'est directement lié à l'origine campagnarde": it was as if there was an implicit contract, by which workers did not contest management prerogatives, but managers knew enough not to step on rural workers' sense of autonomy ("je ne me laisse pas marcher sur les pieds, je dirai son fait à l'agent de secteur comme à tel collègue qui m'emmerde"). The *établi* found that, by contrast, rural workers had a fierce hatred of the retired military officials who had been hired as managers. "Citroën juin 73" and "Citroën octobre 73," ADIV 111J/156.

[85] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 16.

2. Recruiting the Ideal Worker

When the giant La Janais assembly plant opened its doors in 1961, Citroën had one obsession: recruitment. The factory needed to hire and train thousands of young Bretons, and do it quickly. The first 3,000 workers had to be on the line within just six months. This breakneck program was imposed by the nature of La Janais' production: the highly integrated assembly plant had to function as a single unit.[86] Getting such a vast unit off the ground was a daunting task in any circumstance, but De Calan's job was made even harder by Citroën's social project. Few branch plants got by with an all-peasant workforce, and larger decentralized units often ended up recruiting from outside the region to fill up their rosters.[87] But Pierre Bercot assured Rennes officials that Citroën would keep hiring local and undertake "la formation des ouvriers agricoles pour en faire des ouvriers d'usine."[88] In addition, Quai de Javel had a policy of aggressively screening out potential agitators and firing workers at the first hint of trouble. This created a substantial amount of labor "waste," at a time when De Calan needed every body he could get.

In effect, La Janais initially faced critical recruitment shortfalls. During these critical first years, Citroën seemd more desperate for labor than poor peasants were for jobs. The state of the job market had the potential to take key labor issues—not only recruitment patterns, but also salaries, benefits, and power in the workplace—in a direction Pierre Bercot was determined to avoid.[89] De Calan and his allies in Rennes responded with a mix of costly concessions and incredible constraint to accelerate the

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[86] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 14.

[87] Pelata estimates that nationally, decentralized factories only directly received one in eight farmers and their children who left agriculture for another line of work. That nuances the commonplace image that industrial decentralization was a mass reconversion of France's rural population. Within Citroën itself, the company's Caen factory, situated in rural Normandy, had a substantial number of non-farmers even among unskilled workers. Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français: Le cas de la région de Caen, 1950-1980" (doctoral thesis, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, 1982), 252, 298-310.

[88] Cited in Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 91.

[89] Initial recruitment was a critical period for other new branch plants. That was especially true in capital-heavy industries like cars and electronics, which furnished the majority of jobs for French decentralization policy. Patrick Pelata calls this a "brutal" mobilization of labor, to distinguish it from smaller and less integrated kinds of production that allowed for a slower recruitment. In the Caen region, new branch plants that needed to achieve such a vast and rapid recruitment faced remarkable headaches and difficulties to recruit sufficiently. After soaking up the available labor in the immediate Caen area, they organized a veritable shock campaign to recruit in the surrounding region: organizing recruitment campaigns, establishing bus lines, and hiking salaries to compete for local firms' labor. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 228-248. Pelata provides a typology of the different labor recruitment needs of the different sectors that decentralized to Caen: cars, electronics, mechanical productions, and textiles (211-225).

stream of peasants to the factory. This unexpected effort, which repeatedly crossed into the realm of class collaboration, was the cost of imposing their joint vision of the industrial future.

Fresh from the Farm

La Janais' recruitment headaches came as a surprise to all. Citroën's move west was of course founded on the assumption that Rennes had a bottomless supply of poor rurals, and the experience of the Barre-Thomas factory appeared to confirm this desperation for work. When Bercot hired Michel Phlipponneau and his students at the University of Rennes to do a comprehensive study on the state of the region's labor, in 1960, the geographer reported back that La Janais would find more than enough willing workers in the Rennes area.[90] Nonetheless, De Calan soon discovered that a surprising number of Breton peasants either refused industrial work, could not get to the factory, or left La Janais after their first taste of life on the assembly line.

Bercot had not been wrong about the poverty of his native region. The area of eastern Brittany where La Janais recruited contained some of France's poorest rural communities. Farms were small, with average sizes hovering around just 12 ha (30 acres), and high birth rates ensured a steady stream of youth being pushed off of small family farms.[91] Other jobs in the area were hard to come by and paid poorly. Many of Citroën's recruits had been working as agricultural laborers or domestics on larger farms. Some men found work as lumberjacks, butchers, or bus drivers.[92] Whatever the criterion used, Rennes' rural hinterland contained the kind of despondant population that should have made for a captive labor pool.

However, many rural Bretons shied away from La Janais. There were several reasons for this poor turnout. Some peasants simply did not project themselves in another line of work. As one former Citroën worker told Hubert Budor for his 2001

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[90] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 4. The study was a master's thesis done under Michel Phlipponneau's guidance, which has since been lost: René Oizon, "Rapport sur les problèmes de recrutement de la main-d'œuvre de l'usine Citroën de Rennes - La Janais," masters thesis, Université de Haute Bretagne - Institut de Géographie, 1960. Oizon also wrote a thesis, "Problemes humains liés aux implantations industrielles récentes," thesis, 1962. Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 333.
[91] Jean-Pierre Lariviere, "La zone de recrutement de main d'œuvre de l'usine Citroën de Chartres-de-Bretagne," *Norois* (1981): 393-394.
[92] Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

documentary, "Bien souvent ceux qui étaient dans les fermes, ils étaient faits pour rester dans les fermes."[93] Other peasants saw factory work as a form of proletarianization. Owning a farm offered personal autonomy and stability; by contrast, the factory brought strict discipline and the constant threat of a layoff. That was especially true given that La Janais hired 95 percent of applicants coming from farms as unskilled workers (*manœuvres* or OS).[94] These low grades offered the corresponding pay scale. Citroën produced little concrete data on wages and benefits, but a 1967 study estimated that the starting wage on the assembly line was just 26 percent more than the wage of an agricultural laborer. That was a substantial improvement over many rural jobs, and it came with better job stability and pay horizons, but it was not the revolution many associated with the arrival of Europe's most modern factory in the heart of underdeveloped France.

For those peasants who did come to La Janais, confrontation with the reality of factory work could be grueling. Many recruits accustomed to the open air and relative autonomy of farm life were initially revolted by La Janais' enclosed spaces, monotonous tasks, fast pace, and authoritarian hierarchy. Albert Tiénot sums up what many of his coworkers must have felt the first day on the job: "J'ai dit, 'Ca c'est pas possible. Je ne vivrai jamais là-dedans.'...Moi qui avais l'habitude d'être au large...C'était trop dur. Trop dur."[95] Workplace fatigue was aggravated by long commutes, odd hours, and constantly changing schedules. The hardships this imposed were as much social as physical: workers were separated from their friends and families for long periods of time.[96]

The result of these different challenges was lower than expected hiring rates and high initial turnover. De Calan thus confronted a broader reality of decentralized branch plants: most peasants only took factory jobs out of sheer

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[93] Recordings for Ibid.
[94] Citroën often hired people who qualified for skilled worker status (OP) as unskilled workers (OS). Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 87.
[95] Recording for Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.
[96] Every two weeks, the hourly personnel at La Janais switched from morning to evening shifts: from 5 a.m. to 1:40 p.m. or from then to 11:20 p.m. This schedule could lead to insomnia, nervous fatigue, and loss of appetite. The negative social impact often outlasted the physical; workers were separated from friends and children by long days away at odd hours. Joseph Le Borgne describes the physical effects of this change in the documentary, Michel Brault and Annie Tresgot, *Les Enfants de Néant* (1968).

necessity.[97] Such desperation for work differed by social category. Farm owners were more likely to view salaried work as proletarianization, even when they were struggling to make ends meet. As a result, few men gave up their land for Citroën. A greater number were willing to take a factory job if they could keep farming on the side. Such "peasant-workers" initially counted for over 20 percent of La Janais' workforce. This was a lower figure than many expected, given the mythology of the part-time farmer that surrounded Citroën-Rennes, but it was in fact high for a newly decentralized branch plant. In factory's crucial early years, moreover, De Calan could not have gotten by without these men.[98]

Nonetheless, the vast majority of Citroën's new workers were youth pushed off the family farm. This, too, was in keeping with national trends: the transition from a peasant society to industrial work came less through the direct turnover of labor than through a generational rupture. Landless youth had much less leeway to refuse the factory than farm owners. Many had been raised for farm work and were forced to leave home suddenly, with no secondary education or idea of what else to do. Alain Boismartel was a case in point. He had gotten an agricultural degree with the expectation of inheriting the family farm. "Mais un jour au retour du service militaire, mon père m'a dit: 'Ton frère est en âge de travailler. Y'a ta soeur. Y'a plus de travail pour toi'...Donc je suis parti." Farm youth like Boismartel were also more likely to see the factory as a form of social ascension. They were often unaccustomed to substantial cash wages or the other main perk of a Citroën job—a shiny new car, made affordable by a company discount. The steady stream of men like Boismartel kept the average age of La Janais' workforce remarkably young: just 26 years old in 1973.[99]

Desire for factory work differed as much by locality as by social category. De Calan became an expert of these nuances in rural poverty as he tailored his recruitment

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[97] The sociologists Nicole Eizner and Bertrand Hervieu found that despite the poverty of rural France, only a minority of agricultural laborers and farmers' children actively desired to leave farm work behind. "La majorité abandonne l'agriculture ou la campagne contraints par des circonstances extérieures impérieuses," in particular when farms were too small to be maintained or youth were pushed off the land by their parents. Nicole Eizner and Bernard Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979), 99-103.
[98] Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 82.
[99] Chardonnet estimated that they were 80 percent of the workforce, Ibid.

efforts to local conditions. To the southeast and east of Rennes, farms were small but the quality of the land made just enough difference for many families to get by on agriculture alone. Farm revenues here were 10 percent more than the departmental average. As a result, De Calan wrote, this area "n'a lâché que très rarement sa main-d'œuvre." At the opposite extreme, the area to the west of Rennes was so poor that many peasants had already left by the time Citroën's recruiters came through. "Après la Libération les paysans de cette zone ont glissé vers les régions industrielles du Nord ou de l'Est et de la région Parisienne," De Calan explained. "Pour eux, La Janais est arrivée trop tard." In the end, the main source for Citroën's first recruitment drive was to the south and southwest of the factories, in the direction of Redon. Here was a "région rapidement pauvre quand on s'écarte de Rennes," with revenues one-third lower than the departmental average. Farm sizes were somewhat smaller—8 to 10 ha (20-25 acres) on average—but above all they were set on poor land and divided into tiny parcels.[100]

If this southwest stretch presented the seemingly ideal conditions of a peasant community on the brink of collapse, De Calan found that even here many farmers, "s'accrochent à leur terre."[101] The factory director was convinced that many peasants in the Rennes area would eventually have to throw in the towel on their farms, which he considered too small to be viable. But as he later put it, "Ces gens, paysans, vivant mal, difficilement sur des surfaces trop petits, tout de même n'avaient pas le couteau sous la gorge."[102] Rural poverty, it turned out, presented many shades of grey. In the early 1960s, Breton peasants were not desperate enough for Citroën's agenda.

"Le couteau sous la gorge"

La Janais did not have the time to wait for such slow social change. De Calan managed to hire enough workers for the first phase of La Janais' opening, but the

[100] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, ADIV 30J/130. See also Guenhaël Jégouzo, Yvon Bertrand, and Jean-Baptiste Henry, *Une Enquête relative à certaines incidences socio-économiques d'une implantation industrielle récente en milieu rural, région de Rennes* (Rennes: Institut national de la recherche agronomique, 1967), 1-14. Jégouzo and Lariviere provide maps of La Janais' recruitment basin in 1965 and 1975, respectively. Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement."
[101] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, ADIV 30J/130.
[102] Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

difficulties he encountered made it clear that the second phase would be much harder.[103] Citroën would have to take unexpected measures. Pierre Bercot finally approved De Calan's social programs. At the same time, Citroën set out to orchestrate the labor market. Here it relied on the collusion of public authorities, which reached remarkably craven heights as Rennes officials pushed peasants off their land and ensured Citroën's monopoly over their labor.

Bercot's biggest concession was the creation of a dedicated bus network. Ironically for Citroën—the producer of France's iconic popular car, the "2CV"—the lack of motorization in rural Brittany was one of the most important obstacles to further recruitment. Many potential workers simply had no way to get to the factory. Company busing became so common in big decentralized factories that it can seem like an automatic feature of provincial industrialization in postwar France, but in fact corporate officials often resisted this option until the state of the labor market put their back to the wall. In the long run, busing could cost a company as much as the construction of worker housing. Even when they were privatized, bus lines had to be subsidized and unions constantly demanded the reduction of workers' fares. Paris manufacturers were all the more sensitive to these added costs since, in the capital, an excellent public transportation system provided the same service for free.[104]

As a result, Quai de Javel initially took a position common to decentralizing manufacturers: transportation was a worker's own problem.[105] In a matter of months, however, that stance crumbled. Citroën offered workers discounted prices on new cars, but this was a partial solution that would only take effect over the long term. The automaker announced a new era of mass motorization, but for the time being Breton

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[103] De Calan even tried hiring prisoners: "Nous avons, au démarrage de l'usine, tant de mal à recruter le personnel souhaité dans les délais prévus, que j'essaie d'embaucher des hommes sortant de prison qui nous sont proposés. Toutefois, j'écarte les voleurs car la tentation est trop forte dans une usine où le vol est facile...Nous avons de bons résultats avec les condamnations pour ivresse, à condition d'être impitoyables." Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 6, 8, 10.

[104] Unions even began claiming that transportation time was work time, which should be paid as such—a source of unions' realization that everyday life could be a space for labor mobilization Michel Freyssenet, *Division du travail et mobilisation quotidienne de la main-d'œuvre: Les cas Renault et Fiat* (Paris: Centre de Sociologie Urbaine, 1979), chapters 4 and 5; Hatzfeld, *Les Gens d'usine*, 187, 190; Hatzfeld and Pitti, "Usine et ville industrielle," 32-33. On the unprofitable nature of private bus lines at Citroën-Rennes, see "Ille-et-Vilaine sous le complexe Citroën," *Ouest-France*, 3 April 1961.

[105] De Calan arranged for special service on the SNCF rail lines, but that proved woefully inadapted to La Janais' odd hours and dispersed recruitment.

labor remained trapped by the tyranny of short distances. After days of deliberation, De Calan convinced Bercot, "nous devons faire le contraire de ce qui était dicté par l'expérience parisienne," and got busing approved.[106] By 1972, 110 daily lines were shuttling workers back and forth to La Janais.[107]

Buses were also central to De Calan's second concession: accepting longer commutes for his workers. The rapid expansion of labor basins in postwar France had a clear appeal for manufactures. Much like decentralization at the national level, this new geographic freedom allowed them to seek out rural populations and, by expanding the labor pool, to avoid wage hikes and other benefits.[108] These advantages came with a cost, however. The fatigue of a long drive to work weighed on workers' productivity and generated late arrivals to work. Just as importantly, it incited many employees living furthest out to move to the city, risking to create the urban working class that Citroën, and city officials in Rennes, so feared.

Therefore, De Calan initially tried to limit commutes to a one hour each way. At the time, that corresponded to hiring radius of about 30 kilometers. But a mix of recruitment imperatives and political pressure convinced the factory director to reconsider this stance. De Calan recognized that the only new labor reserve in the Rennes area was far to the west, some 50 to 70 kilometers from La Janais. Representatives of these areas lobbied Citroën for jobs. Paul Ihuel, the President of the Conseil Général of the Morbihan department (and the Vice President of the CELIB), boasted that he had "de la main-d'œuvre à volonté pour l'envoyer à Rennes."[109] It was the mayor of Ploërmel—a poor Morbihan town located almost seventy kilometers from La Janais—who first convinced De Calan

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[106] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs.

[107] Citroën kept the buses private and fought union efforts to reduce workers' fares, but it could not avoid subsidizing them. It initially did so in secret, to maintain the myth that transportation was workers' prerogative, and then openly after 1968, to fend off union critiques that it was not helping defray this major cost in workers' budgets. Renseignements généraux note, 1 October 1965, ADIV 511W/164; Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 10. Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 83; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 160. Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 93-55. For union demands that the company reduce workers' fares, see *Regards*, 7 May–2 July 1967, Joseph Cussonneau private archives; CGT to Citroën Rennes, 16 May 1972, ADIV 1169W/1.

[108] Jacques Malézieux, "Le bassin de main-d'œuvre des grandes unités de production industrielle. Évolution récente," *Bulletin de l'Association de Géographie Française* (1981): 52.

[109] Minutes of the BEI, 28 March 1960, ADIV 30J/108.

to experiment with busing his residents into the plant.[110] The factory director was satisfied with the results and quickly expanded his recruitment basin. By 1963, nearly half of La Janais' workers lived beyond the thirty kilometer limit initially imagined.[111] A third came from neighboring departments and ten percent had commutes of more than sixty kilometers, or up to four hours round-trip.[112]

Alongside these concessions, Citroën used two forms of constraint. The first was a breathtaking scheme hatched by De Calan to push peasants off their land. The factory director asked the regional prefect, Jacques Pélissier, to accelerate farm consolidation "afin de libérer la main-d'œuvre qu'appelle l'industrialisation de cette région."[113] De Calan had hired the agronomical research agency INRA (Institut national de la recherche agronomique) to study the rate of farm departures in the Rennes area. The agronomists calculated that if farmers living on plots smaller than 20 ha (50 acres) left the land, La Janais would have enough new wage labor to get by. De Calan took these figures to the prefect and asked him to speed up the process of farm consolidation. Incredibly, Pélissier complied. He ordered his services to refuse government subsidies for farms smaller than 20 ha; this effectively condemned these family farms, pushing their owners to seek work elsewhere. "C'est ceux-là que nous avons recrutés," De Calan proudly told Hubert Budor.[114]

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[110] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 7, 9.
[111] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, ADIV 30J/130.
[112] In the end, the limit to this labor basin came not from worker fatigue, but rather from the fact that no bus provider was willing to exceed 70 kilometers, a round trip of more than four hours. Workers further out would have to spend weekdays in the city. De Calan reported that half of the workers who lived beyond the 30 kilometers radius had children. De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, p. 9-10, ADIV 511W/164; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 119-125.
[113] "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," p. 17-17bis, ADIV 30J130.
[114] Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*. De Calan recounted this episode mulitple times in interviews. See Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 108-109; Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*. He also discussed it in "Industrialisation de la Bretagne. Extrêmement confidentiel ," 17-17bis, ADIV 30J130. For the INRA report, see Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, especially p. 14 for its conception. De Calan explained to justify his enclosure strategy, "Quand on a fait des investissements aussi importants qu'une deuxième tranche d'usine, il faut impérativement tenir des délais." He also claimed that this strategy simply accelerated a "processus inévitable" of farm consolidation and assured the profitability of a factory that brought new life to the region without a foreign invasion:

Marx's notion of "primitive accumulation" is now used to describe a variety of phenomena in urban and regional studies.[115] However, De Calan's machinations came stunningly close to the term's original meaning: a joint venture by state and capital to alienate peasants from their land, in order to expand the available supply of wage labor. De Calan was quite explicit about this goal in his letters to the prefect. The state should keep Brittany's small farmers on the land until industry needed a new workforce, at which time it should push them into wage labor. In his eyes, this was the "établissement harmonieux de l'équilibre 'Industrie/Agriculture'" that regional planning should strive to achieve.[116] Union leaders were not aware of De Calan's request, but it certainly illustrates their complaint that Citroën's social model "rappelle les jours les plus sombres du début de l'ère industrielle."[117]

Just as important as ensuring a steady stream of new wage laborers was guaranteeing that they came to La Janais and stayed there. Bercot's choice of Rennes, with its anemic industrial base, was of course intended to carve out a labor monopoly for Citroën's new factory. His policy of all-peasant recruitment served the same goal. De Calan studiously avoided hiring in areas where other job options were available: Rennes, its northern suburbs, and smaller industrial centers like Fougères and Vitré.[118] This policy of avoiding each others' privileged labor pools cemented Citroën's entente with local employers, which spilled over into other issues, such as a *de facto* agreement to not surpass a common pay scale.[119]

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[115] David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 287, 298-307, 317.

[116] As he told the prefect, it was "en fonction des possibilités d'emploi de la main-d'œuvre offertes par l'industrie que tel ou tel type de culture devrait être favorisé dans telle ou telle région." "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," p. 17-17bis, ADIV 30J130.

[117] "Conférence de presse du 27/12/1963," ADIV 111J/156.

[118] Letter of 3 February 1960, Favrais papers, ACO archives; Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 82; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente."

[119] Citroën-Rennes aligned itself at the top of the Rennes region's pay scale in order to not upset local industry, according to Raymond Ravenel, who directed the Barre-Thomas factory in 1964-1966 before becoming Citroën's *directeur général*. Raymond Ravenel, "La décentralisation des automobiles Citroën à Rennes," *Cahiers du CREPIF* (1990): 51. Citroën agreed to slow the tempo of La Janais' hiring in order to ease the pressure on the job market. Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 244. In the end, local employers' fears were dispelled: they experienced no salary hikes and no competition for skilled workers. Granier, "La Zone industrielle," 258-259, 262.

But no matter how much they tried to isolate their labor pools, decentralized manufacturers were never entirely safe from competition. This danger was especially acute for large factories like La Janais, whose need to be close to a major urban center came into direct conflict with the corporate desire for rural isolation.[120] Certainly, manufacturers who found themselves in potential competition could collude with each other to balkanize their common labor basin, as Citroën was implicitly doing. But betting on cooperation came with a risk, especially at the height of the Trente Glorieuses. As newcomers entered the field or production goals spiked upward, employers could break ranks, giving workers the upper hand.[121]

No such thing happened in Rennes, thanks to the eager cooperation of public authorities.[122] De Calan explicitly requested that the regional prefect and the CELIB prevent other companies using male labor from establishing a plant within one hundred kilometers of La Janais, so that Citroën could "absorber la main-d'œuvre qui deviendra disponible dans les années à venir."[123] These officials agreed to the request. In the Bureau d'études industrielles (BEI), which worked to attract new manufacturers to the region, Michel Phlipponneau even recommended allowing Citroën to directly supervise negotiations with Parisian auto parts makers interested in coming to Brittany.[124] The

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[120] James Rubenstein speaks of "a spatial tension between the goal of accessibility to large labor markets and the goal of isolation to avoid competition and higher wages." Rubenstein, *The Changing U.S. Auto Industry*, 252.

[121] Citroën itself found this out the hard way with its second decentralized factory, in Caen. Although the Caen plant was only a fifth the size of La Janais, it found a labor market that was soon sucked dry by other factories; management again resorted to long bus commutes, but also imported several hundred immigrants and suffered the condemnation of local businesses whose workers were "stolen" by the automaker. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 237, 243-244. More broadly, with its inundation by new branch plants, Caen epitomized the kind of intense labor competition Rennes officials hoped to avoid. The "banalization" of job skills through the standardization of production allowed workers to jump from factory to factory at very rapid rates. Big national manufacturers often broke from regional rates, increasing wages to higher than smaller regional employers could afford, when they needed to recruit. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 223, 244-247; Thierry Baudouin and Michèle Collin, *Le Contournement des forteresses ouvrières* (Paris: Librairie des Méridiens, 1983), 57. On labor market competition and collusion, see also Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 272, 473; Philippe Madinier, *Les Disparités géographiques de salaires en France* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1959).

[122] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 21, 53.

[123] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, p. 24, ADIV 30J/130.

[124] Minutes of the BEI, 22 February and 28 March 1960, ADIV 30J/108. In reality, Citroën's parts providers had the same resistance to coming to Rennes. As a Ministry of Industry note explained the lack of immediate auto spinoffs in the Breton capital, "quant aux fournissuers d'équipements ou d'éléments ils n'ont pas intérêt à se présenter sur le même marché de l'emploi comme le concurrent de leur client. Mais

boosters' main misgiving was that refusing a Rennes location might compromise new investments: labor avoidance undermined the growth pole logic.[125]

By contrast, officials made no bones about the Citroën's main goal: denying Breton workers the range of job opportunities that would allow them to bargain for better wages and working conditions. The automaker's monopolistic strategy worked remarkably well. As a Labor Inspetor observed, once a farmer left the land for La Janais, he generally had just two options: accept the automaker's conditions or move out of the region.[126] This dismal choice explained Breton workers' vaunted "stability." The Rennes factories had fantastic turnover rates among new recruits, who were put off by the grueling conditons of the assembly line. But those who survived this initiation period often pursued the rest of their career at La Janais.[127] For the company, that was an appreciable change from the constant turnover of employees in the Paris region, where workers could shop around for the best offer. Breton boosters, meanwhile, could advertise the stability of the region's workers to potential investors.[128]

If Citroën held the local job market hostage, it could not control the national scene. De Calan found that despite the influx of new factory jobs in Rennes, many Breton workers still preferred to "head up" to Paris.[129] In the 1960s as in previous

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certains d'entre eux ont développé ou créé des installations nouvelles en foction de cette implantation de Citroën, dans des villes de l'Ouest comme Laval, Angers, Redon, Flers." Bazin note, "Demande de prime de développement industriel Société André Citroën à Rennes La Janais," 15 April 1966, p. 3, CAC 19910817/12.

[125] Few auto subcontractors followed Citroën during the Trente Glorieuses—disappointing hopes that the West could become a major auto region. Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 80; Flatrès, *La Bretagne*, 97; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 21, 26, 31-32. By contrast, La Janais indirectly fueled Rennes' other nascent industrial "vocation," electronics, whose workforce was predominantly female. City officials could not only develop this sector without stepping on De Calan's toes, but they could also offer outside manufacturers a captive labor force: Citroën workers' wives. Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 146, 154; Meyer, *Histoire de Rennes*, 448-449.

[126] "Projet de rapport initial du Directeur départemental du travail et de la main-d'œuvre d'Ille-et-Vilaine concernant la demande de convention d'adaptation professionnelle presenteée le 26 juillet 1971 par la S.A. Automobiles Citroën," ADIV 1488W/4; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 53.

[127] By 1960, the Barre-Thomas plant had lost as many workers as it had retained. In 1963, a particularly bad year, La Janais retained 884 new hires but lost 1401 others. "Note sur l'emploi de la main-d'œuvre aux établissements Citroën," May 1966, ADIV 1488W/4;Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 42; Harismendy, "L'Automobile: du bocage à la ville," 331.

[128] On the stability of Citroën's Breton labor force, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 114-116; Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 154.

[129] For them, migration promised a fuller "liberation" from the land than the jobs offered by decentralization—and voting against decentralization with their feet offered greater power than trying to fight employers in the confines of the isolated branch plant. On Paris region wages and migration networks: De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the

generations, the capital offered a former peasant substantially better salaries and job opportunities than he could find at home.[130] There was a national and racial aspect to getting ahead in the Paris region. Since foreigners often filled the lowliest tasks there, provincial migrants were more likely to enter a Paris factory higher up the ladder—and no longer as the native equivalent of an immigrant worker, as was the case in La Janais.[131] But above all, the Paris region offered workers exactly what Citroën and Rennes officials were denying them at home: a diversified job market, which allowed them to switch companies in search of better jobs, higher wages, and autonomy from authoritarian managers.[132]

The continued migration of young Bretons challenged a central notion of industrial decentralization: that provincial residents were tied to their hometowns and regions by their social relations and sense of place, while capital was becoming increasingly mobile. This trope had both progressive and reactionary uses in postwar France. Paris manufacturers of course hoped to exploit such local roots, which could make provincial residents a captive workforce. At the same time, however, politicians and labor unions used the notion of place as an empowering principle. The slogan that regional residents aspired to "travailler au pays" was the lynchpin of demands for the redistribution of jobs and investments. La Janais showed that the reality was more

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prefecture, December 1969, 2, 52J/105; De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 15; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 130-132.

[130] Real wages were substantially better in Paris than in the provinces for similar types of work. In addition, workers generally moved up the pay scale more quickly in the capital. Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 37; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 143, 179. Overall, it seems likely that a worker at La Janais could expect to earn between 15 percent and a third less than in Paris for a comparable job and qualification. Citroën confidentially floated the figure of 15 percent to prefectoral authorities and the Rennes branch of the PCF estimated at least a 13.5 percent difference in 1965. However, this did not include the individual *boni* that made up part of workers' pay. In Rennes industry in general, a 1955 study found average wage gaps of between 13 and 25 percent less than in the Paris region, depending on a worker's skill level; a 1961 study put the overall average at 36 percent less than in the Paris region. Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 48, 132; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 146.

[131] Chevalier wrote, "l'ascension professionnelle et sociale des immigrés bretons résulte surtout de ce que cette main-d'œuvre se trouve désormais relayée dans les tâches les plus rudes, les moins payantes et les bas quartiers par d'autres immigrants nouvellement arrivés, professionnellement et ethniquement plus défavorisés, parmi lesquels les travailleurs nord-africains occupent la première place." Cited in Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 165. For an account of the treatment of immigrant workers in Citroën's Paris factories, see Robert Linhart, *L'Établi* (Paris: les Éditions de Minuit, 1978).

[132] Meanwhile, many young provincials took a job in a Paris factory with the hope that it would be a springboard to a non-industrial career. Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 136, 148, 154, 160-168. At Citroën-Rennes, many workers who did have industrial skills could only get hired as semiskilled workers—a fact that motivated some in this situation to leave for the Paris region. Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 87.

complex than either side let on. Many of Citroën's workers did accept worse conditions to get a job close to home, but a number of young peasants found the boundaries of the local community too constraining—especially in a city dominated by a single manufacturer.[133] Business was not alone in using spatial mobility to gain power over the job market.[134]

Nonetheless, the subtext to this continued migration was a depressing one: Citroën asserted a stunning degree of control over the Rennes area's job market. This was not a preordained outcome. In the early 1960s, La Janais' fantastic appetite for labor and the surprising resilience of peasant communities had the potential to force Citroën into making unprecedented concessions. The potential for rapid industrialization in Rennes would have aggravated this situation, forcing the automaker to actively compete for workers. In the end, De Calan managed to impose a mixed deal. Citroën began to fund workers' transportation and other social outlays. This was no small deal: Quai de Javel was forced to accept measures that went "dans le sens diamétralement opposé à celui prévu initialement," as De Calan later put it.[135] But state officials' remarkable willingness to cater to management's interests allowed Citroën to avoid fundamentally changing its social model. Orchestrating the job market preserved the hallmarks of Citroën's successful decentralization: an exclusively peasant workforce, the aggressive repression of potential troublemakers, labor stability, and the maintenance of Rennes' low pay scales.

Results that Count

By 1965, De Calan had successfully navigated La Janais' difficult phase of initial recruitment. The factory now counted some 6,000 employees, nearly all from the

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[133] Migration to Paris was boosted by the fact it was not always harder than moving to Rennes. In fact, Breton migrants' dense networks in Paris meant that for some it was actually easier to find a job, housing, and friends there than in Rennes—which after all, had only recently been designated Brittany's capital.
[134] I am borrowing from Jefferson Cowie's discussion of the respective uses of community and space by workers and capital. In Brittany at least, national migration fundamentally altered the setup he describes, in which labor remains rooted in local communities while large corporations benefit from their greater spatial scope and freedom. Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 182-190. On migration as a form of worker empowerment and advancement that differed from decentralization policy, see Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 340-341.
[135] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 5-9.

region.[136] Most unskilled workers were straight off the farm; as for skilled workers, De Calan wrote, "leurs attaches rurales sont encore très fraîches." Even management was essentially Breton. Headquarters had sent down less than one hundred employees from the company's Paris factories to get La Janais up and running, and their proportion quickly dwindled to less than 10 percent of the factory's managers. Even in the top ranks, Citroën preferred local hiring and internal promotion to outside intrusion. In sum, Brittany's labor pool had fulfilled its promise. But for the moment, this seemed like a mixed victory. As De Calan recognized, he had narrowly averted disaster, and the government officials observing the Rennes experiment concluded that it was time to reevaluate rural provinces' capacity for industrialization.[137]

Optimism about rural industrialization had grown quickly in the 1950s. At the beginning of the decade, the common sense in French industry remained that the capacity for industrial work remained rooted in regional cultures, which were hard to change. The corrolary of this idea was that it was dangerous to leave the safety of the Paris labor basin for the sirens of cheap rural labor. But then the notion that unskilled labor had become plastic, even ubiquitous, spread rapidly. Powerful people supported this view: provincial boosters demanding state and private investments, corporate officials in search of a new workforce, and government planners looking to ease the nation's labor shortage. All wanted to believe that the "surplus" population which showed up on their calculations was so much available labor.[138]

Well into the 1960s, however, planners knew remarkably little about how the transfer of farmers to the factory actually took place.[139] The experience at Rennes suggested that it was time to again put the emphasis on the limits of social change in the provinces. The INRA's study on La Janais offered a mixed assessment for national planners. The decentralized factory did attract a substantial number of peasants who

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[136] On the renewed recruitment difficulties of the late 1960s, see Directeur départemental du travail to Directeur regional du Travail et de la main-d'œuvre, 14 March 1968, ADIV 1488W/5. On recruitment phases, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 108, 113; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 38-39, 51.

[137] De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, ADIV 511W/164; De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 82; Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 77.

[138] Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 15, 120-121; Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 61-64; Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 298-300.

[139] Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 15-17, 69, 120-130.

otherwise would not have left the land, but farm departures clearly were slower and more limited than initially expected. The report concluded, "le processus de 'destruction créatrice' [envisagé dans le Plan] ne jouera...pleinement que dans le long terme."[140]

A 1966 report from the Ministry of Industry went further. The department that supervised French automakers, the DIME (Direction des industries métallurgiques, mécaniques et électriques), concluded that planners' calculations of rural labor reserves, "se sont souvent révélés beaucoup trop optimistes." These formulas simply compared total population with current job rates to estimate surplus labor. A more accurate assessment of available workers would need to calculate, "la partie de cet excédent qui a à la fois le goût et les qualités" for an industrial career. The DIME thought the gap between theoretical labor surpluses and actually willing workers was especially strong for France's agricultural populations. Leaving the farm for the factory "implique une profonde modification du genre de vie et presque toujours un changement d'habitat; l'expérience prouve qu'elle n'est guère acceptée que par des jeunes gens avant ou après leur mariage."[141]

The labor studies provided by state planners and provincial boosters were thus as much a hindrance as a help to decentralizing manufacturers, since exagerated projections could land a new factory in the pitfall of recruitment shortages. "Sur le plan français," the Industry report warned, "l'expérience de ces quinze dernières années a montré que la création d'une usine importante dans une ville de province soulevait des problèmes dont on soupçonnait mal l'ampleur au départ." French manufacturers thus needed to think twice before decentralizing. A factory like La Janais was far too big for most provincial cities, the DIME concluded. Even a plant employing 5,000 people should aim for a bigger urban center than Rennes, and France's largest factories would have to remain close to the Paris region.[142]

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[140] Ibid., I-III, 120-121.
[141] Coutrot, "Note sur la réimplantation des usines Citroën de la Région Parisienne," 10 January 1966, CAC 19900583/9.
[142] Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français," 228, 248; James C. Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile en France," 217, 470-472.

The DIME's doubts about rural industrialization were precisely what Rennes officicals had hoped to avoid. Even worse, they came at a crucial moment for Citroën and Rennes. In 1965, the automaker had finally begun planning the closure of its outdated Paris factories. The Industry report was meant to advise the prime minister as to whether the firm should be allowed to stay in the Paris region, as its executives wanted, or be pushed out to the provinces in accordance with decentralization policy.[143] La Janais' recruitment problems helped determine the government's decision to allow most of Citroën's production to remain close to the capital. The government's head planner for the Paris region, Paul Delouvrier, prepared for the migration of the auto production to a new site in Aulnay-sous-Bois, a suburb north of the capital.[144]

In Rennes, civic leaders were caught off guard by the announcement of the Aulnay move. Ever since the automaker's vast land purchase at La Janais, in 1959, rumors had circulated that Citroën would undertake a substantial transfer of its Paris production to the Breton capital.[145] Now those hopes were dashed. The CELIB's Secretary General, Joseph Martray, complained to the press, "Tous nos efforts pour rééquilibrer la province par rapport à Paris sont rendus vains." Henri Fréville felt equally betrayed. Bercot and De Calan had recently participated in the development of Rennes' progrowth city plan, even as they were secretly

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[143] Colonna, "Note pour M. le Directeur du cabinet: réimplantation des usines Citroën de la Région parisienne," 10 January 1966, CAC 19900583/9.

[144] Coutrot denounced the "milieux ultras de 'la decentralisation quoiqu'il en coûte.'" Coutrot, "Note sur la réimplantation des usines Citroën de la Région Parisienne," 10 January 1966, CAC 19900583/9. The difficulties of finding enough labor in the provinces only reinforced transportation considerations and the need to maintain part of Quai de Javel's existing workforce, which went in the same sense. The Aulnay plant was one of the biggest exceptions government officials made to industrial decentralization policies. Jacques Malézieux, "Règlement et dérogation: étude de cas," *Cahiers du CREPIF* (1990): 42-46. In return for Aulnay, Citroën agreed to increase production in Rennes and Caen, and to create the Metz plant. Loubet, "La Société anonyme André Citroën," 566-571. See also the minutes of the special interministeriel reunion at Matignon, 4/8/1966; Debré letter to Bercot, 5/26/1966; and the note "Position prise par M Debre," all in CAC 19900583/9. The rest of the dossier in CAC 19900583/9 contains internal negotiations on this issue. A good overview is Querenet, "Note pour M. le Directeur du Cabinet: historique du 'dossier Citroën,'" 3/28/1966. For Citroën's initial propositions for relocation, see "Aménagement Citroën," November 1965, CAC 19910817/12.

[145] Minutes of the Comité directeur du Bureau d'études industrielles, 28 March 1960, ADIV 30J/108. Citroën's own investors had the same suspicion: Assemblée générale ordinaire, 5 July 1960, Citroën archives, 2008 AD 14120. So did the CFTC: minutes of the Commission administrative, UD CFTC, 13 February 1960, ADIV 111J/99.

preparing the Aulnay move. Now the city's vast infrastructure program might be rendered useless.[146]

Bercot called his Breton partners back into line, fearing that too much provincial protest might incite the government to reconsider its approval of Citroën's new factory in the Paris region. Bercot assured officials in Rennes that the Aulnay decision would not affect La Janais, which would continue its expansion; in effect, the plant doubled in size, with over 12,000 workers by the early 1970s.[147] Nonetheless, the CELIB continued to insist that Citroën's production would be better off in Brittany, fighting rural out-migration, than attracting continued immigration to France's over-congested capital. Notwithstanding La Janais' recruitment headaches, claiming that thousands of rural Bretons were desperate for factory jobs remained the West's best strategy for obtaining new industrialization.

The DIME suggested that manufacturers would have better luck in areas with some industrial tradition than in rural regions such as Rennes, but the following years suggested there was no simple correlation between the social background of a local population and the ease of industrial recruitment. Citroën opened a new gearbox factory in Metz in 1969, expecting to hire unemployed miners. The plant turned into a costly debacle; only 50 miners chose to make the leap into auto work, forcing the company to dispatch employees from Paris and recruit immigrant workers.[148] In this light, Rennes seemed like a very successful experiment. Bercot told Citroën's company board in 1970, "L'usine de Rennes a coûté plus cher que l'usine de Metz, mais les conditions de travail à Rennes sont excellentes et le bénéfice de la stabilité de la main-d'œuvre a compensé largement

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[146] "Transfert hors de Paris des usines Citroën," *Le Figaro* 9-10 July 1966.

[147] Bercot accused Fréville of getting Citroën "mêlés à une querelle dont nous pourrions un jour avoir à faire les frais," and pressured him to calm down. Fréville responded in the affirmative, but complained that all preparations had been made in secret—despite Citroën's participation in recent planning debates, which would be impacted by the decision. Bercot letter to Fréville 11 July 1966, and Fréville response 18 July 1966, ADIV 52J/105.

[148] Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française*, 361. Doreen Massey found a somewhat analogous contrast between rural and coalfield industrialization in postwar Britain. Miners were a well-organized working class, identifying themselves with their former jobs and defending the benefits that had come with it. Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (New York: Routledge, 1995), chapter five, "The Effects on Local Areas: Class and Gender Relations."

la majoration du prix de réalisation de l'usine."[149] Once early problems were ironed out, Breton peasants were among the group's most productive workers.

The Rennes experiment also measured up more favorably to the Paris region after 1968. Auto factories in the French capital were only able to meet an unexpected upturn in production by massively recruiting foreign immigrants.[150] Factory management and housing became logistical nightmares. And many plants, including Citroën's, were hit by the wave of worker contestation in the late 1960s. By contrast, Citroën-Rennes did not strike—in 1968 or at any other time—and by 1973 it hit more than 14,000 workers without employing a single foreigner.

This all-native workforce was a singular feat in the French auto industry. Even decentralized factories, which were supposed to provide jobs for unemployed provincials, often ended up turning to immigrants in the face of recruitment shortfalls.[151] In Rennes, by contrast, Citroën and public officials worked in concert to keep foreigners out.

For the CELIB, the "homogeneity" of Brittany's labor was one of the region's selling points for outside investors. Jules Prod'homme, the President of Rennes' Chamber of Commerce, told his colleagues at the BEI, "il conviendrait...de faire valoir que la Bretagne est une des rares régions de France qui n'ait pas de main-d'œuvre nord-africaine. Créer une entreprise nouvelle en Bretagne, c'est donc en totalité donner un travail convenable à des Français de France."[152] This kind of thinking was right up De Calan's alley.[153] Even before

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[149] Minutes of the Conseil d'administration de la SACA, 15 September 1970, Citroën archives.
[150] Hatzfeld, "Les Ouvriers de l'automobile," 354-355.
[151] Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 211-212, 479-481; De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 14; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 123; Loubet, *Citroën, Peugeot, Renault et les autres*, 77. Immigrant workers were brought in for short periods to complement the Rennes workforce; there were some 120 in 1975. See the Direction départementale du travail list in ADIV 1488W/4; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 35. Other than that, the lack of foreign workers was a persistent feature of the Rennes factories. In his memoirs written at the end of the 1990s, De Calan still vaunted the lack of immigrants: Citroën-Rennes only had a few French Caribbean citizens and naturalized North Africans. De Calan interview in Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.
[152] Minutes of the Commission régionale d'expansion économique, 25 February 1956, ADIV 1076W/55.
[153] "La France ne peut pas continuer longtemps dans la voie présente," he wrote about French industry's reliance on immigrant workers in 1973. De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 18. De Calan felt that a decadent empire had lost its taste for hard work and was being overwhelmed by a foreign invasion. As he wrote in his memoirs, "A St-Denis, dans les Forges, je constate, avec une certaine

La Janais opened, then, Pierre Bercot promised Henri Fréville that he was committed to avoiding "un afflux d'ouvriers étrangers à la région."[154]

The company threatened to go back on its word when recruitment difficulties loomed. De Calan informed Rennes officials that if he could not find more Breton recruits, Quai de Javel would "faire appel à l'extérieur, en particulier à la main-d'œuvre maghrébine ou les mains-d'oeuvre encore plus africaines si vous voulez."[155] In the end, their joint efforts to push more peasants off the land increased recruitment to sufficient levels. Citroën preserved the "homogeneity" of Brittany's labor, which long remained one of the region's selling points for outside investors.[156]

Early difficulties had raised doubts about peasants' capacity for industrial work—a fact that had a potentially important impact on Rennes' development, by slowing the transfer of Citroën's investments. By the early 1970s, however, the Rennes area's rural labor pool had fulfilled the ambitious goals set for it. La Janais hit its historic high without inflating wages, coming into competition with local manufacturers, or importing immigrants; it also proved itself as one of the company's most productive plants. By showing that a rural social order could accommodate cutting-edge industry, the Citroën experiment solidified a development pitch that would prove no less relevant in subsequent decades of post-Fordist production and global capital flows.

3. Living In-between

By the early 1970s, La Janais had been the subject of two ethnographic documentaries. The films' contrasting portrayals reveal an uncertainty about how to classify a French society in transition.[157] In *Les enfants de Néant* (1968), Annie Tresgot

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inquiétude, que le personnel est étranger à 95 percent. Le travail y a pourtant perdu de sa dureté; mais les Français redoutent le bruit et la chaleur. Je me rappelle que l'Empire romain, a connu sa perte quand ses citoyens n'ont plus voulu se battre et ont été remplacés, dans ses Légions, par des mercenaires. Est-ce le cas [en France]?" Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 4.

[154] Cited in Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 91.

[155] Interview for Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

[156] In particular Japanese manufacturers like Canon and Mitsubishi. Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 66.

[157] On what follows, see Alain Michel, Nicolas Hatzfeld, and Gwenaële Rot, "L'ouvrier en personne, une irruption dans le cinéma documentaire (1961-1974)," *Le Mouvement social* 226 (January-March 2009): 67-69, 72-75.

and Michel Brault portray a seemingly timeless rural France perduring in the shadows of the ultra-modern assembly plant. This juxtaposition is embodied by a peasant-worker, Joseph Le Borgne, whom we follow from farm to factory. On the weekend, Joseph barters a pig with his small-town mayor. Clips of folk dancers and Breton women's distinctive headdresses signify the persistence of regional particularity.[158] A few years later, Louis Malle also went to La Janais to film *Humain, trop humain* (1974), but he opted for a very different ideal-type: the universal Fordist worker. *Humain* could have been shot in any modern assembly plant. We never leave the walls of the factory as we follow unidentified human bodies through a rationalized production process. Even Breton accents are absent from this silent documentary.[159]

The opposition between *Neant*'s timeless peasant and *Humain*'s universal worker illustrates a point made by anthropologist Susan Carol Rogers: at times of rapid change, French observers turn to the peasantry as a symbol of the Hexagon's historic diversity, which modernization and national integration, it is assumed, are erasing. The problem with this narrative, Rogers explains, is the assumption that France's rural social structures and regional particularities simply disappear, giving way to the forces of change. In reality, they change too, adapting to new circumstances.[160]

There is no better evidence of this principle than La Janais. Peasant practices of production, consumption, and housing were the counterpart of "Europe's most modern factory." This reproduction of a rural traditions was not a sideshow to the Trente Glorieuses—the residue of an incomplete modernization. On the contrary, certain aspects of peasant France were central to postwar expansion, deliberately preserved by governement modernizers and national corporations. If men like Philippe de Calan and Michel Phlipponneau had a clear project for Citroën's peasants, however, they remained uncertain about the direction of social change through the end of the 1960s. Two questions were up in the air. First, how would the overlap of farm and factory lifestyles evolve? Second, as new workers left the land, would they move to the city, as in

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[158] Brault and Tresgot, *Les Enfants de Néant*.
[159] Malle does however shoot in the "Salon de l'auto," in Paris. Louis Malle, "Humain, trop humain," (1974).
[160] Susan Carol Rogers, "Good to Think: The 'Peasant' in Contemporary France," *Anthropological Quarterly* 60 (1987).

previous phases of French industrialization, or transition to the American suburbia of De Calan's ideal?

Peasant-workers

La Janais proved remarkably successful at mobilizing the fraction of rural Bretons determined to keep one foot on the land and one in the factory.[161] If this mixed lifestyle was a company ideal, it was also a concession to those peasants who made it a precondition for entering La Janais, as De Calan made clear in this advertisement for job applicants:

> Vous pouvez donc dans un premier temps venir travailler à l'usine en gardant votre maison et votre exploitation...Venez donc faire un essai. Les risques sont nuls.[162]

Both management and workers found advantages, in terms of wages and stability, in integrating agriculture and industry. However, this came at a cost in terms of workers' fatigue and limited investment in the world of the factory. Well into the 1970s, both parties continued to grapple with the tradeoffs of the peasant-worker lifestyle.

De Calan's promotion of subsistence consumption was no anachronistic ideal. Staying on the farm allowed most of his new workers to make ends meet. For "peasant-workers" in the proper sense—a factory worker who maintained his farm on the side—a Citroën salary could raise his real revenue by 70 percent or more. That amounted to an income which many a worker in the Paris region would have envied.[163] Such men were "les plus nets bénéficiaires de l'implantation de l'industrie automobile dans la région

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[161] The Hexagon had a venerable and growing tradition of such "double activity," in which factory jobs shored up traditional small farming. The number of farmers working in industry grew between 1955 and 1967 (from 570,000 to 686,000), even though the total number of farmers had dropped by nearly 2 million in the same period. In northeastern France—often taken as a model for the "underdeveloped" West—more than half of all "actifs agricoles" also did non-farm work. However, in other newly decentralized factories, the rates of such holdovers seem to have been much lower than at Citroën-Rennes. At recently installed factories in Loudéac, in northwestern Brittany, just 17 percent of new workers coming from the farm continued to do agricultural labor, and only 9 percent holding down their own farm—roughly half the rates as at Citroën. Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*; Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 87-88. And in Caen peasant-workers were rare and most new rural workers did not come straight from the farm. Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 305-310, 315, 363. On double activity from an agricultural perspective, see Michel Gervais et al., *Histoire de la France rurale, tome 4: La fin de la France paysanne depuis 1914* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992), 274.
[162] Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.
[163] Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 179.

rennaise," De Calan noted.[164] At the opposite extreme, a new Citroën worker who had to leave his parents' farm in order to come to the factory quickly found his budget stretched thin. The cost of rent, food, and transportation wiped out much of the extra pay that he or she earned by working at La Janais instead of in a traditional rural job.[165]

Understandably, then, many workers stayed on the farm for a number of years. Peasant-workers made up 18 percent of De Calan's unskilled workers in 1973.[166] If this fulfilled Citroën's ideal of integrating farm and factory, full-time farmers continued to invest more of their labor force in the land than management would have liked. De Calan remained optimistic that sheer hardship would force many peasant-workers to trim back their farms to a handful of hectares, but this was slow in coming. In the early years, only one-quarter of them sold off their farms entirely; many stubbornly clung to large units. A farm provided not just a source of income, but also autonomy, insurance against a layoff, and a way of keeping the door open to another social status than that of the proletarian worker.[167] These were venerable strategies, dating back to the nineteenth century, and they continued to have their appeal in postwar France.

As Vichy planners had recognized, the easiest way of maintaining an overlap of farm and factory was not through workers' bodies, but through their kin. Farmers' children—the bulk of La Janais' new workers—often continued to live with their parents

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[164] De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, p. 6, ADIV 511W/164; Ibid., 143, 179.

[165] For a worker who lived 50 kilometers out and could not continue to live on the farm or practice auto-consumption, working for Citroën might bring a revenue gain of less than 10 percent, or even turn into a negative transaction. And for a large majority of the area's small family farms, it was *less* than the average income—the "revenue per family labor unit." Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 47-48, 147. Likewise, women coming from jobs as maids could find their initial salary increasingly eaten up by new housing and food expenditures. Meynier and Le Guen, "Les grandes villes françaises: Rennes," 18.

[166] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 15.

[167] This is the case of Joseph Le Borgne, the main character of the documentary, Brault and Tresgot, *Les Enfants de Néant*.
Of 57 peasant-workers interviewed at Citroën in 1965, "un seul a déclaré ne pas vouloir le rester." That was in part a way of avoiding the "prolétariat intégral" of full-time workers. Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 89, 176. Some peasant-workers hoped to leave the factory once they had saved up enough capital to make their small farm a viable affair. Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 124. This hesitancy to leave the farm behind matched trends elsewhere. In Rouen, small farmers who were forced to choose between the land and the factory generally refused becoming a full-time industrial worker; they preferred to take jobs, that allowed them to hold onto their farm, such as working for a rural commerce. Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 123-126. Likewise, comparative studies conducted in OECE countries suggested that most peasant-workers kept a farm their entire life; it was only in the following generation that their children made a complete break with the farm. Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 179.

until an unbearable commute or an impending marriage forced them to move out.[168] This setup had several drawbacks. First, these young workers generally paid for their room and board by continuing to work on the farm. For some, this amounted to a veritable second job.[169] Secondly, these young Bretons had to accept what was in effect a prolonged adolescence, living at home in order to afford other purchases, especially a new car. The fact that the workers had to choose between these two symbols of personal autonomy and consumer society—a house and a car—summarizes the limits of Citroën's rural Fordism.[170]

The peasant-worker was typed as a masculine figure, but Citroën's mode of rural industrialization depended just as much on stretching out female labor. Wives and children picked up the slack on the farm when their peasant-worker husbands headed off to the factory. In addition, De Calan rapidly increased the hiring of women inside La Janais: they made up 14 percent of the workforce in the early 1960s and 25 percent ten years later.[171] Male workers' wives were the privileged target. They were often a captive labor pool, especially if the Citroën bus was their only ride out of town. And the demand for such jobs gave management patronage to leverage against its employees.[172] Whether on the farm or in the factory, then, women faced an analogous position to peasant-workers: they sacrificed energy and time with the family in order to earn a second income for the household.

While it waited for workers to cut back on farm tasks, Citroën adapted to the rhythms of rural life. The hours of La Janais' two shifts were scheduled to give workers either the morning or the afternoon free for farm work. Management learned to be

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[168]A majority of youth in this case turned part of their salary over to their parents and continued to work on the farm— Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 64, 76-81, 117.

[169] In 1967, a full 62 percent of De Calan's recruits continued to do farm work of some kind. This even though such youth were in the same way as peasant-workers. Ibid., 81. De Calan offered the same figure in 1973, but it is not clear if the percentage had stayed the same or if he was just regurgitating the earlier figure, De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 15.

[170] In 1975, some 60 percent of workers had a Citroën car and three-quarters of them had bought it after entering the factory, according to a study on 20 communes south of Rennes. Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente."

[171] On women's place in the factory, see Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 120-121; Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 84; Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

[172] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 53.

lenient with absenteeism and fatigue.[173] Other stakeholders in the Citroën experiment were more frustrated by the slowness of social change in Brittany. Labor unions complained that rural workers were too rural, and not enough workers. So long as they kept one foot on the farm, "Citroën's peasants" would tolerate low wages, be unavailable for organizing, and generally refuse to recognize their condition as an exploited proletariat. The Communist leaflet *Unité ouvrière* offered a fictional exchange in which the urban worker Pierre complains that the farmers at La Janais are "des privilégiés, ayant plusieurs revenus." Luckily, the peasant-worker Jean-Pierre is there to set the record straight. These peasants had been "obligés de quitter la Terre" by the "Pouvoir Gaulliste," which had programmed the disappearance of some 800,000 small farms in the Fourth Plan. Recognizing their mutual exploitation was the only way to unite "[les] gens de la ville et de la campagne."[174]

To De Calan's surprise, agricultural unions could be even more hostile to the peasant-worker model. Giving peasants a job in the factory was supposed to free up land, allowing remaining farmers to create viable mid-sized units. However, La Janais actually slowed down this consolidation process. Factory wages went to shoring up small farms that would not have survived on agriculture alone. De Calan's ideal peasant-worker, with his 5-6 ha (12-15 acres) of land on the side, was itself the antithesis of the modern family farm. The FNSEA (Fédération nationale des syndicats d'exploitants agricoles) was so opposed to this social model that it threatened to block the factory's bus routes with its tractors.[175]

More of La Janais' workers shed their peasant ties in the 1970s. Small farmers sold off part or all of their land; above all, young workers moved off the

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[173] Management and unions recognized that this was a rare realm where La Janais' authoritarian hierarchy cut workers substantial slack. "Citroën juin 73" and "Citroën octobre 73," ADIV 111J/156. The human resources manager (and former peasant) Alain Boismartel told Hubert Budor: "je savais très bien qu'à une époque, lorsque c'était la saison des moissons, lorsque c'était la saison des foins, lorsqu'il fallait charruer pour faire un certain nombre de chose et que je savais que le gars avait une petite ferme. Je savais très bien ce qu'il faisait...On avait un pourcentage d'absentéisme prévu. Le jour où ce sont les foins, si on a le double de ce qui est prévu." Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*.

[174] *Unité ouvrière*, April and November 1963, Joseph Cussonneau private archives. For similar reasoning, see minutes of the CGT Rennes local meeting 14 October 1966, and press conference of PCF departmental federation, 22 October 1971, Cussonneau archives.

[175] Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 120, 128; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 18, 23, 74-75. Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 15. On this problem elsewhere in France, see Gervais et al., *Histoire de la France rurale, tome 4*, 318-319.

farm. But with many employees clinging to the advantages of a small farm and management willing to make sacrifices in order to prevent the emergence of an industrial working class, this transition was slow in coming. Groups that had counted on a quicker separation of farm and factory work found themselves making concessions to the messier mix of social categories that made the decentralized factory work.

Dissolving the City

For most of the 1960s, officials were also uncertain about what forms of urbanization La Janais would generate. In 1966, De Calan told the prefect that the French "découvrent ce que les Américains, les Anglais et les Allemands ont découvert bien avant eux...[C]e n'est plus la campagne qui se glisse dans la 'ville', c'est la ville qui se dilue dans la campagne."[176] However, dissolving the city was still a wish for the future, not a description of contemporary French realities. On the contrary, during the first half of the Trente Glorieuses, workers continued to stream into traditional blue-collar neighborhoods and new social housing estates hastily built to accommodate them. The two key ingredients for suburbanization—mass motorization and individual home construction—lagged behind the buildup of France's industrial workforce, which was approaching its historical zenith. In these circumstances, only a concerted effort could usher in the "American" future that De Calan was promoting.

The first obstacle to Citroën's goal of keeping workers out of the city was the sheer distance of their commutes.[177] As De Calan expanded his recruitment radius ever wider in search of labor, La Janais became an experiment in the limits of human fatigue and family dislocation. When the factory opened its doors, most existing evidence suggested that commutes of over an hour each way were unsustainable; beyond that threshold, workers moved to the city. De Calan's

[176] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, ADIV 30J/130.
[177] No bus provider was willing to exceed 70 kilometers, a round trip of more than four hours. Workers further out would have to spend weekdays in the city. Finally, De Calan reported that half of the workers who lived beyond the 30 kilometers radius had children. De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, p. 9-10, ADIV 511W/164; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 119-125; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 39-50.

main foil, Peugeot, was a good case in point. Its labor basin was equally dispersed as at Citroën-Rennes, with bus routes stretching out some seventy kilometers. However, only ten percent of its workers lived more than thirty kilometers away—compared to over fifty percent at La Janais.[178] Peugeot's management and workers agreed that long bus rides came with too many costs in fatigue and absenteeism. The company built subsidized housing so that the most distant workers could move to Sochaux. The result was a veritable "Peugeot archipelago" of company-sponsored homes and apartment blocks surrounding the factory.[179]

That was exactly what Citroën hoped to avoid in Rennes. However, a recent study had confirmed similar results in the Breton capital, and other decentralizations confirmed new workers' tendency to move to the city.[180] The most dramatic example was in nearby Caen, were the influx of new workers from the countryside was so great that the national government mandated new HLM projects, despite the opposition of local officials.[181] But the most damning evidence against De Calan's project came from Citroën itself. In 1960, the University of Rennes studied workers at the Barre-Thomas plant, to help the company plan for La Janais. Despite's Citroën's rural rhetoric, the study showed that its new workers either had been living near the factory when they were recruited or had since moved to Rennes. A full 70 percent of the Barre-Thomas' employees now lived in the city; only 1.7 percent lived more than twenty-five kilometers away.[182]

In short, the urban concentration of workers still seemed like an inevitable part of the industrialization process in France. That conclusion created a conflict

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[178] Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 53, 56; Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre," 49.
[179] Hatzfeld, *Les Gens d'usine*, 190-202.
[180] Only 11 percent of industrial workers who had been living on the farm when they were hired continued to commute from over 30 kilometers away. Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 53, 56; Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre," 49.
[181] Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 497-499.
[182] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 14. The Rennes university study was a master's thesis done under Michel Phlipponneau's guidance, which has since been lost: René Oizon, "Rapport sur les problèmes de recrutement de la main-d'œuvre de l'usine Citroën de Rennes - La Janais," masters thesis, Université de Haute Bretagne - Institut de Géographie, 1960. See Ramadier, "Étude sur l'implantation," 91, 93.

among Citroën and Rennes officials. Henri Fréville accepted the conclusion of the university study. He announced an increase in his HLM program in order to brace for a wave of migrating workers.[183] Other civic leaders were less enthusiastic. In the CELIB, Michel Phlipponneau and the president of Rennes' Chamber of Commerce, Jules Prod'homme, resisted the prospect of Citroën workers flooding the Breton capital. Phlipponneau put the matter bluntly: "La main-d'œuvre [doit] rester localisée où elle est."[184]

Above all, Pierre Bercot refused to support Fréville's program of HLM construction.[185] As a rule, Citroën refused to subsidize collective housing. France's other automakers had begun doing so after a 1953 law required companies to set aside one percent of their salary base to fund workers' housing programs—the "1% patronal"—but Quai de Javel steered its contribution almost exclusively to private construction.[186] Pierre Bercot was not about to break this rule in Rennes. Yet behind closed doors was a very different story, as Bercot pressured Henri Fréville and the Ministry of Construction to accelerate Rennes' program of HLMs. There was good reason for that: in La Janais' early years, some 2,000 Citroën workers had moved to the city, a figure close to the 1960 study's estimate.[187] Citroën needed urban housing—Bercot just hoped it would be temporary and did not want to foot the bill.[188]

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[183] Rennes had one of the highest construction rates in France and a relatively big social housing stock compared to other similar cities. Over half of all new housing units built in the city between 1947-1974 were state-subsidized; over 37 percent were HLM rental units. Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 166-169. On the main HLM units, see Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 199-205. Rennes ended up with a relatively large social housing park. Ory, "Naissance d'une métropole," 268-271.

[184] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 67. Phlipponneau bluntly reiterated four years later: "La main-d'œuvre [doit] rester localisée où elle est." Minutes of the BEI, 28 March 1960, ADIV 30J/108.

[185] Alexandre Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église et liberté syndicale, un exemple concret: L'affaire Frémin" (masters thesis, Université de Haute Bretagne Rennes II), 61-64; Caro, "Les usines Citroën de Rennes," 132-133; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 73-81.

[186] Loubet, *Citroën, Peugeot, Renault et les autres*, 76-77. In 1966, the Communist newspaper *L'Humanité* estimated that only 15 percent of Citroën's "1% patronal" had gone to public housing authorities. 11 June 1966, CFDT archives, 1B/416. For other automakers' housing policies, see Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 484-487.

[187] De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 16.

[188] The agencies in charge of social housing, or HLMs, were outraged about having to build units for Citroën without the company footing any of the bill. The mayor's adjunct for infrastructure, Georges Graff, asked Bercot for a token contribution, telling him that "[l]e moindre geste de votre part" would be a big help to alleviate the grumbling of the HLM administrations. Georges Graff to Citroën, 3/31/1960, Rennes municipal archives (RMA) 31W95. See the rest of this dossier and ADIV 52J/105 for negotiations

De Calan argued that Citroën's refusal to support urban housing was a response to workers' desire to stay in the countryside.[189] The INRA's study of La Janais employees suggested he was right. Only two of the 306 workers it surveyed wanted to move to Rennes.[190] This was an extreme resistance to urban living, but it matched the broad trend the sociologists Nicole Eizner and Bernard Hervieu found among other French peasants who had become industrial workers. Many rural Frenchmen saw the city as a space of constraints, rather than a place of expanded opportunities. They viewed migration as a forced exile that cut them off from rural acquaintances and pastimes, like fishing and *bricolage*. Indeed, new workers even expressed their urban anomie in some of the same terms they used to describe the factory. Downtowns were a space of claustrophobia, isolation, even incarceration.[191]

The INRA study concluded that distaste for urban living was thus a deeply rooted feature of peasant mentality—perhaps even a clash of urban and rural "civilizations."[192] But workers' experiences of the city were actively shaped by the deplorable state of Rennes' affordable housing, which Citroën's opposition to HLMs only aggravated. The majority of Citroën workers who moved to the city ended up in slum dwellings. A smaller fraction entered HLMs and Citroën's dormitory for male bachelors.[193] This bachelor housing was often the most alienating option. The CGT complained that the company crammed workers in at

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over housing. Other community leaders denounced Citroën's use of its "1% patronal" for private housing. *Regards*, report on Citroën-Rennes 7 May-2 July 1967, Joseph Cussonneau private archives. See also Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 166.

[189] De Calan claimed that Citroën was simply defending the popular aspiration to a suburban home with a garden. De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 15-18.

[190] By comparison, a general survey of Rennes workers living in rural areas showed that 32 percent wanted to move to the city. Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 71; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 109-110, 123-124.

[191] As a result, like in their efforts to reconcile farm and factory work, new workers often went to great lengths to return as soon and as often as possible to the countryside. That was true whether it meant traveling long distances for weekends back home, consecrating the major part of a salary to a new suburban home, or giving up the factory job for less pay in a rural job. Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, 116-126.

[192] The agronomical expert who performed the INRA's Citroën study concluded, "L'opposition ville-campagne évoque 'le rapport de deux sociétés, de deux civilisations.'" Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 109-110, 123-124.

[193] Ibid., 110-115.

rates exceeding legal occupation limits, spied on them, and even went through their personal affairs. No wonder city living felt like incarceration.[194]

Even so, the dilapidation of urban housing was no guarantee that workers would not "slip into the city" (*glisser vers la ville*). If anything, housing options were poorer in the countryside than in Rennes itself. A study of Citroën workers' rural homes showed that a majority of them were overcrowded, and a full 68 percent had no running water. That was even worse than Rennes' slum dwellings.[195] Moreover, rural residents were increasingly demanding other urban amenities, such as access to jobs for working women, better education for their children, and more shopping and leisure options.[196] Above all, if Citroën's young workers often stayed in their parents' home for a number of years, marriage would eventually force most of them to move out.[197] They would then confront a lack of affordable suburban housing. Suburban development remained anemic around Rennes until the 1960s.[198]

In the end, the inadequacy of rural housing was the strongest "push" factor driving Citroën workers to Rennes, even outweighing long commutes in their decision to move. Well into the 1970s, achieving the agrarian ideal still required a major effort to avoid "uprooting" the peasantry and to "pallier l'attrait de la ville" on new workers.[199] Citroën thus provided home loans to workers, to fix up their farm or to buy a new house. The company used the money it saved by not funding Rennes' HLMs, but it likely went beyond the legal minimum. In effect, the geographer Jacques Malézieux found that many French manufacturers spent

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[194] *Unité ouvrière*, April 1963, Joseph Cussonneau private archives; and the *établi* reports on the factory, "Citroën juin 73" and "Citroën octobre 73," ADIV 111J/156. The dormitory housing was so unpopular that Citroën canceled other planned units. Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église," 63.
[195] Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 125.
[196] De Calan, "Un équilibre régional agriculture-industrie: l'usine de La Janais," January 1966, p. 6, ADIV 511W/164; Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement," 84; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 115-116.
[197] Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 70-71.
[198] "Ille-et-Vilaine sous le complexe Citroën," *Ouest-France*, 3 April 1961, ADIV 30J/118; Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 325, 331, 339-342.
[199] In the words of the geographer Jean Chardonnet. Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 84. As such, the automaker faced a tension discovered by Vichy planners: rural France offered low wages and housing expenditures, but not meeting new consumer and housing aspirations risked provoking a flight from the countryside, undermining the entire model.

more than the "1% patronal" in order to keep their workers in a suburban setting.[200]

The state and rural townships provided much of the infrastructure that made rural living a viable option, such as running water and paved streets, but Citroën had to initiate the most effective form of rural improvement: suburban housing developments. The automaker helped initiate developments in Chartres de Bretagne and the nearby town of Rheu. The success of these projects inspired a wave of municipally sponsored *lotissements* in the region (private developers only took over the lead at the end of the 1960s). With Citroën salaries and home loans helping fill these new housing tracts, the automaker kept its promise to bring suburbanization to Rennes.[201]

On the other hand, Citroën's images of a suburban dawn have to be taken with a grain of salt. A 1975 study estimated that just 30 percent of Citroën-Rennes workers were homeowners.[202] Moreover, their housing choices were constrained by their professional category and submission to company authority. First, residential geography reproduced the social inequalities of the factory. Management and skilled workers lived closer to the city and workplace, while semiskilled workers often accepted a longer commute.[203] That was in part a question of land prices, but company and municipal policies also shaped the housing market. At Chartres de Bretagne, Mayor Chatel and Citroën had a mutual interest in reserving the town for higher-income housing. That gave factory managers a leisurely stroll to work while keeping the rank and file a safe distance from the factory.[204] Other nearby towns likewise ruled out affordable

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[200] Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement," 83; Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre," 52.
[201] According to Michel Phlipponneau, "L'implantation de Citroën à Chartres-de-Bretagne, le succès des lotissements municipaux du Rheu marquent vers 1960 le véritable démarrage d'une croissance suburbaine qui se développe avec une extrême vigueur." Privately initiated developments took off after 1968, when they were promoted by the Ministre de l'Équipement, Albin Chalandon. Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 325, 331, 339-342. On later suburban trends in Rennes, see Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 165-178.
[202] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente."
[203] Chardonnet, "L'usine automobile de Rennes La Janais," 84-85; Le Boudec, "Citroën-Rennes." Census results did not allow a rigorous testing of this claim Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement," 389, 392.
[204] Chartier, "Citroën en Bretagne," 10. Citroën also promoted middle-class manager housing in nearby towns like Bruz. Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 12.

housing.[205] Secondly, Citroën used residency to reward and punish worker behavior. Management doled out home loans on an individual basis; housing patronage was one form of paternalism that Citroën was happy to retain. The company also took advantage of workers' long drives and rigid bus schedules, by finding ways to make commuting a nightmare for unruly employees.[206]

By the turn of the 1970s, De Calan declared victory: most young employees who moved out of their parents' house stayed in a rural residency, the most distant workers often continued to accept their long commutes, and many who had initially moved to Rennes were now heading back to the suburbs. Citroën's home loans reflected this trend: the majority of loans had initially gone to urban apartments, but after 1966 suburban houses dominated by a 5-to-1 margin.[207] Citroën had successfully avoided the creation of an urban working class.[208]

La Janais was the harbinger of broader trends in France. The most solvent industrial workers increasingly headed to the suburbs, leaving behind the HLMs built to accommodate them in the heat of postwar growth. Meanwhile, vast labor basins tied together by company bus networks became a distinctive sociospatial formation of provincial industrialization in the Trente Glorieuses. The same forces as in Rennes—decentralized factories' fantastic labor needs, companies' preference for rural dwellers, and the expulsion of blue-collar populations from city centers—created commuting times unique in French history.[209] Even the

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[205] Le Boudec, "Citroën-Rennes," 72.
[206] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 81.
[207] Including the Barre-Thomas—which at one point had 70 percent of its workforce living in the Breton capital—only 2,000 employees out of 14,000 lived in the city as of 1973. In addition, whereas the majority of Citroën's home loans had initially gone to apartments, proportions changed after 1966 and individual houses dominated by a 5-to-1 margin. De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural," 15-16. See also De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the prefecture, December 1969, p. 2-3, 52J/105; Jégouzo, *Exode agricole*, 125.
[208] Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 2, 54-56.
[209] Peugeot's transportation network hit its historic peak, rising from 3,500 workers served daily in 1939 to 4,200 in 1953 and 13,300 in 1970. Hatzfeld, *Les Gens d'usine*, 185-188. New factories in cities like Dunkirk, Le Havre, and Caen followed suit. Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre," 52-54. On busing as a distinctive sociospatial formation of the Trente Glorieuses, Michel Freyssenet wrote, "le ramassage par car se révèle en France la formule socialement la plus adaptée dans le contexte actuel, pour mobiliser massivement, à des heures précises en un point donné, des travailleurs postés, dispersés dans une aire large, dont on souhaite qu'ils conservent les mêmes conditions de vie, et dont on peut être amené à accroître

Paris region followed suit. Venerable Billancourt set up its own bus system in 1974, as rising rents increasingly pushed workers to the outskirts of the agglomeration.[210]

De Calan was right: giant factories had ceased to be a source of urban concentration. But in order to make it happen, the company had subsidized buses, cars, and homes, while resisting Rennes' efforts to build affordable urban housing. Citroën's initial blueprint for the future industrial metropolis had included neither this hefty corporate engagement nor such lengthy workers' commutes. Finally, the company actively used the geography of recruitment and residency to promote its power over workers. The two most distinctive aspects of La Janais' labor basin—its vast size and scrupulous avoidance of other firms' recruitment zones—were clear measures of labor control.[211]

Even as De Calan stretched La Janais' recruitment to the limits of human exhaustion, he promised that such extreme commutes would be temporary—a step on the road from a peasant society to a more properly suburban configuration.[212] To some extent he was right. Many Citroën workers moved closer to Rennes; La Janais' labor basin shrunk faster after 1973, as recruitment needs fell and gas prices rose. Nonetheless, a substantial fraction of employees remained tied to the residency patterns established in the 1960s.[213] No longer peasants and yet not quite American suburbanites, they elicited the fascination of contemporary observers.

Almost American

The hardest thing to evaluate about Citroën's social project is how it affected the concrete lives of workers. The problem is as much one of conceptualization

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brusquement le recrutement lorsque la 'chaîne' de production est doublée." Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 9, 200-204.

[210] Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre," 49-50; Freyssenet, *Division du travail*, 204-206, 209-223; Hatzfeld and Pitti, "Usine et ville industrielle," 33; Nwafor, "L'Evolution de l'industrie automobile," 448, 484.

[211] Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement;" Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, 14; Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente," 39-50.

[212] De Calan note, "Industrialisation de la Bretagne," ca. 1963, ADIV 30J/130.

[213] On Citroën in particular, see Lariviere, "La Zone de recrutement." On the Rennes area, Phlipponneau, *Changer la vie*, 333. On French industry more generally, Malézieux, "Le Bassin de main-d'œuvre;" Freyssenet, *Division du travail*.

as one of sources. A 1970 article by the journalist Jean-Dominique Boucher illustrates the difficulty onlookers had in categorizing Citroën's workers. These former peasants, he said,

> forment un peuple à part. Une espèce nouvelle, mais qui n'a pas respecté tout à fait les lois habituelles de l'évolution. Les ethnologues l'étudient avec soin, l'examinant périodiquement, enregistrent et comparent ses réactions. On est même venu du Japon pour l'observer.

However, Boucher did not care for the trope of timeless archaism in the midst of the Trente Glorieuses that was recurrent in recent portrayals of La Janais. "C'est bon document," he wryly observed. "D'autant plus précieux que ces 'ouvriers-paysans' risquent, très bientôt, d'entrer dans le folklore." For his article, Boucher had interviewed a couple who worked at Citroën-Rennes, Edouard and Maria Georget. The Georgets were no peasant-workers. Certainly, the suburban town where they had just bought their first home resembled their native village, which they still visited every weekend, and they had salads growing in the back yard. But in ten years, the couple had cycled to and from Paris, spent eight years in Rennes, entered postwar consumer society, and dropped farming ("On ne peut pas mener les deux métiers à la fois," Edouard said of the mixed lifestyle).[214]

Boucher thus seized upon the same metaphor as De Calan for categorizing the Georgets: the couple was "américain sans le savoir." Edouard drove to work in his new car and came home to a suburban development. "Ici, devant son pavillon fraîchement crépi, l'ouvrier de chez Citroën en est à la dernière phase de sa mutation," Boucher concluded. Nonetheless, the journalist did not have to dig very far below the surface to realize that Citroën's rural workers were not the middle-class suburbanites he associated with the American dream. After ten years on the job, this two-salary household finally had both a house and a car. But they had no TV—the lack of an antenna on the roof was a "[s]igne extérieur de non-richesse." Their new home was a do-it-yourself affair. And even their automobile was not up to the American metaphor. The couple had just one small 2CV to share between them. "Bien sûr," Boucher admitted, "elle n'a rien à voir

[214] Jean-Dominique Boucher, "Rural chez Citroën," in *Les Provinciaux ou la France sans Paris*, ed. Jean Planchais (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1970).

avec le mastodonte nickelé de son homologue américain, et cela permet de donner des limites à la comparaison."

No wonder, then, that Boucher's Americanization hypothesis elicited skepticism from the Georgets:

> 'A l'américaine'... Bien sûr, j'ai eu conscience de faire sauter sur leur chaise les Georget quand j'ai, pour la première fois, employé l'expression, évocatrice des bungalows aussi confortables que les salaires de leurs habitants. On eût dit une mauvaise plaisanterie...Il est bien évident que, avec ses deux salaires d'O.S. Citroën et une maison neuve sur les bras, le ménage Georget est obligé de calculer serré.

Boucher told the couple that the American metaphor had less to do with purchasing power than with lifestyle—La Janais' mix of suburban living and a modern factory.[215] Even so, Boucher knew this analysis was tenuous. And if Citroën's rural worker was not a middle-class suburbanite any more than a timeless peasant in factory garb, what was he? The journalist was not sure. He concluded, "Edouard Georget et ses compagnons échappent encore aux classements, désespérant ainsi ceux qui pensent que l'homme du XXème siècle ne peut décemment vivre sans une étiquette au front."[216]

Of course, Citroën workers represented too diverse a group to be fit into a single category. Hubert Budor makes this point well in his 2001 documentary. The retired workers he interviewed offer almost a "control group" of the different variables in the Citroën experiment.[217] That begins with the Georgets. Three decades after Boucher, Budor interviewed the couple. They offered a balanced assessment of their experience as a Citroën household, which in many ways reflects De Calan's initial ideal. Edouard climbed the ladder of worker qualifications and consumer aspirations. Factory work remained no dream job and its hours were hard on family life, but the Georgets were compensated in other ways. A regular shift provided Edouard with substantial time off—an appreciable difference from farm work. Maria had retired after six years in the factory

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[215] "[Q]uand on parle d'*américanisation*, c'est à une nouvelle organisation de l'existence quotidienne qu'on fait allusion plutôt qu'au 'standing.'"
[216] Boucher, "Rural chez Citroën."
[217] Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën*. For all that follows, I am using the transcripts of these interviews kindly provided to me by Hubert Budor.

to take care of the home. Balancing work and family was made easier by the fact that they lived just a short commute from La Janais.

Some of Budor's other interviewees represented a more rural take on De Calan's ideal. Following the factory director's prescriptions almost to a tee, René Ruelloux kept six hectares of farmland throughout his career in the factory and then into retirement. For him, farming was a hobby that compensated long days cooped up in the factory. "C'est une détente," René told Budor. "Vous en avez d'autres ils vont faire du jogging. Ils vont faire des virées en vélo...Moi, c'était de bricoler ici en arrivant." Unlike jogging, however, agriculture was hobby that allowed this family of twelve (grandmother included) to make ends meet without Mrs. Ruelloux having to work outside the home. As René recognized, the farm "nous permettait d'avoir bien des choses...Tous ces à-côtés là...ça compensait peut-être le salaire qui n'était pas là."

A third couple, Eliane and Henri Baril, broke with these middle-of-the-road assessments. For them, the appeal of the rural-worker model wore off with time. At the outset, this young couple of Citroën workers had a relatively enviable situation. They used their education to attain a good status in the factory. Henri in particular started off as a skilled worker, which meant better pay, better hours, and a life spared of the monotony of the assembly line. With their two salaries, the Barils were able to buy a house where Eliane had lived as a child, some fifty kilometers from Rennes. They were the shock troops of modernization in their rural village, owning the first new car and the first TV in town ("à part l'instituteur peut-être"). Henri proudly recalls, "ça a dû faire plus d'un envieux et ça incitait les gens à sortir de leur trou pour aller gagner de l'argent." Their village soon boasted twenty Citroën workers who formed a privileged "clan à part" in the community, since those who had stayed on the farm kept a jealous distance.

However, the couple had increasing regrets. Henri's professional horizons narrowed in the factory, in part because he refused to adhere to Citroën's house union—a prerequisite for advancement. He never moved beyond the ranks of the skilled worker, while colleagues who played by company rules shifted into management positions. Meanwhile, the appeal of rural living gradually diminished. In the 1960s, Henri had been happy to move back to the countryside after a taste of bad urban housing in Rennes. And when the couple returned to Beauvais, they still relished the countryside's calm and

leisure activities: hunting, town balls, and parties with childhood friends. But the initial advantages of a small-town existence gradually disappeared. Henri dropped hunting, friends moved out, and the village calm was replaced by an invasion of summer tourists.

Above all, a long commute grew old. Mixed with the odd hours of the factory, it took a heavy toll on family and friendships:

> Henri: Travailler. C'est pas le travail physique qui est dur. C'est le travail en équipe [i.e., the hours of a two-shift factory] qu'est tuant. On est complètement désaxés par rapport à la vie sociale. On ne peut pas participer à la vie sociale. Si on travaille le matin, on est du matin. Le soir, il faut se coucher tôt...Le soir, on arrive vers minuit à l'époque. C'est fini. Y'a plus qu'à aller dormir. Il restait que les week-ends pour— C'est une vie qui de ce point de vue-là est, qu'est gâchée.
>
> Budor: La vie de famille?
>
> Eliane: Oui, aussi...
>
> Henri: Les enfants, faut les mettre en pension.
>
> Budor: Et votre fille?
>
> Eliane: Ça l'a gênée aussi un peu.. Elle était pas souvent avec nous. C'est ma belle-mère qui l'a élevée en fin de compte.

In short, De Calan's model of rural Fordism failed the Barils. Both the factory and rural living chipped away at the supposed "antidote" for a life of hard labor—free time and a family to enjoy it with.[218] "Ça serait à refaire, je ne reviendrais sûrement pas ici," Eliane concluded.

Given this experience, it is easy to see why the Barils have conflicted feelings about the prospect of a new generation following in their footsteps.[219] On the one hand, as we follow Eliane through her last days on the job, she expresses remorse that she will not be replaced. Citroën is outsourcing its female work, leaving the remaining women to lament:

> Marie: Faut laisser la place aux jeunes.

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[218] As such, they echo the findings of Beaud and Pialoux at Peugeot. In Sochaux, too, workers faced the contradictions between manufacturing work and the family life that justified it, and became increasingly sad and resigned as they aged in the factory. Stéphane Beaud and Michel Pialoux, *Retour sur la condition ouvrière: Enquête aux usines Peugeot* (Paris: Fayard, 1999), 54-63.

[219] Beaud and Pialoux show the ambivalent stances that aging postwar workers often have of the prospect that their children might enter an industrial career. This mixed pride in their own worker heritage, a desire to push their children away from the harsh conditions and stigmatization of the factory, and a recognition that a stable manufacturing job would at least provide a decent income and security for a generation marked by structural unemployment. Ibid., 161-162.

> Eliane: Si seulement c'était vrai !
>
> Marie: Oui, moi j'aimerais bien donner ma place à quelqu'un aussi. A un jeune.

On the other hand, however, given the difficulties of their own lives, the Barils refused to have their daughter enter the car factory. After struggling in school, she therefore worked a low-paying service job in a supermarket, went through a period of unemployment, moved to the Paris region, and finally left the salaried workforce to be a stay-at-home mom. This reads like a laundry list of the social situations that decentralization policy had been meant to avoid—an ultimate rebuke to the ideal that assembly lines could assure the social uplift of provincial youth.

A final couple, Alain and Odette Boismartel, started off in a similar situation as the Barils but ended up in a very different place. They almost chose a rural residency, but ended up moving into a new suburban home close to the factory. Odette stayed home with their children. That compensated for the long absences of her husband, Alain, who aggressively climbed his way up the corporate hierarchy. The couple considered that this sacrifice was worth it. Alain experienced an extraordinary social ascension: a tenant farmer's son who left school at age 14, he finished his career in La Janais' upper management. This career represents the best of what decentralization—and Citroën's commitment to internal promotion—had to offer. It also shows the importance of the "company spirit" that Henri Baril rejected. Alain embraced Citroën's union-free social model. He uses Budor's interview to defend the company's public image, even weeping in gratitude for a factory that gave his family "une vie extrêmement bien remplie."

The Boismartels are middle-class suburbanites—the achievement of the American model. But the very elements of their success are reminders of the more mixed evaluations of Budor's other interviewees. Many La Janais workers remained tied to the assembly line, accepted longer commutes, and endured more domestic hardship to make ends meet on a Citroën salary, either by combining farm and factory work or remaining a two-salary couple. Last but not least, the Boismartels measure their good fortune against the new generation of workers. Alain had hoped his children would follow in his footsteps, but with Citroën no longer hiring the younger Boismartels were forced into a more precarious career path than their parents. The couple's gratitude for the factory of

the Trente Glorieuses is rooted in the knowledge that Citroën's postwar experiment has come to an end.

Conclusion

Citroën came to Brittany in search of cheap and docile labor, but this goal found its place in a broader regional planning ideal, which had been theorized in the 1940s and was promoted by Rennes' civic elites. Keeping workers in the countryside was no anachronistic project. On the contrary, the solutions it offered French officials were more pertinent than ever in the Trente Glorieuses. The fantastic increase of the Hexagon's manufacturing production was taking place to an ever greater extent through decentralized expansion. In these conditions, garden living eased the rapid urbanization of rural France, allowed industrialists to claim that they could humanize Fordism without reforming the factory, and promised to rein in wages and unions in an era of expanding consumer opportunities and stricter labor laws.

A concerted effort by state and company officials made this ideal a reality at Citroën-Rennes—perhaps more than at any other big decentralized factory. To paraphrase De Calan, however, they just barely pulled it off. Recruitment shortfalls initially called into question official calculations of poor provincials as so much latent labor, desperate to step foot in the factory. To the chagrin of company headquarters, the Fordist branch plant had to be adapted to the particularities of rural France. Citroën made concessions in terms of transportation, housing, and adjusting the factory to the rhythms of farm work; in return, it ganged up with state officials to push peasants off their land and monopolize their professional horizon. Last but not least, new workers made their own sacrifices to the "green factory" model. Many continued to live and work on the farm for years to make ends meet. For others, the road to suburbia passed through urban slums or grueling commutes.

For nearly two decades, then, the Citroën experiment was just that—an experiment. By 1973, however, Philippe de Calan was ready to declare it a success. The Rennes auto factories, he wrote, had revealed "un certain nombre de lois économiques importantes" about pursuing modern industrial growth within the structures of a peasant

society.[220] De Calan shared his findings with observers hungry for such knowledge. He sent reports to Brittany's prefect, its regional development committee, and the academic journal *Géographie et recherche*. He advised Citroën on its other rural branch plants and received manufacturers from the world over who wanted to learn about mobilizing peasant labor in their own decentralized factories.[221] Other observers studied Citroën-Rennes for their own count. Agronomists, government planners in Paris, and even the OCDE tracked its results.[222] TV journalists and film crews came to gawk at Rennes' peasant-workers—living emblems of a society in transition.

The results of Citroën's experiment had been a long time coming. La Janais was a response to issues first raised by state planners in the 1930s and 1940s; De Calan's conclusions, intended to inform the decentralizations of the Trente Glorieuses, were only published on the eve of the oil crisis. The extent to which his goals and social categories shifted in the following years is underscored in Hubert Budor's documentary. We follow De Calan for one last trip to the La Janais assembly plant, where he tells the current director, Marcel Rioux, about the factory's origins. This is a tale of triumph. La Janais is an industrial success and its workers live outside the city. De Calan boasts about having gotten Bretons peasants to "vivre à l'américaine. Par un coup de baguette magique on leur a fait faire 300 ans."

However, it soon becomes clear that the elderly aristocrat's paradigm of an urban-rural dichotomy is out of place in an era of generalized suburbia:

> De Calan: Ce qu'il y a de bien, ça a tenu bon au fond. Les ruraux ouvriers sont restés. [Cela] a un petit peu changé mais pas tellement.

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[220] De Calan to Sous-préfet Larvaron, 2/15/1973, ADIV 511W/166; De Calan, "Une implantation industrielle en milieu rural."

[221] De Calan received visits not just from within the Hexagon, but also from corporations the world over: Alfa Romeo, Australian automakers, and even the director of the USSR's giant truck factory, Kama. "En buvant un verre de champagne," De Calan recalled of his Soviet visitor, "il aborde [le problème de] l'OS, comment faire accepter un travail répétitif." De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the prefecture, December 1969, p. 1, 52J/105; Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs.

[222] These included representatives of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* and Sicco Mansholt, the European Commissioner for Agriculture (De Calan, "Civilisation industrielle, civilisation d'abondance et des loisirs," study sent to the prefecture, December 1969, p. 1, 52J/105) and the INRA study, Jégouzo, Bertrand, and Henry, *Une Enquête*, for its context see 15-17, 69, 120-130. Citroën's Raymond Ravenel—specialist of professional training, director of the Barre-Thomas from 1964-1966, and future director general of the company—participated in the eleven-country OECE study on the industrial mobilization of peasant labor, Henri Krier, ed., *Main-d'oeuvre rurale et développement industriel: Adaptation et formation* (Paris: Organisation européenne de coopération économique, 1961), 126.

Riond: Je ne sais pas si ce sont des ruraux au sens d'il y a quarante ans!...

De Calan: Ils vivent à la campagne. C'est des ruraux. C'est plus du tout des exploitants. Y'a plus rien d'agricole. Mais ils sont restés ruraux.

Riond: Oui. Mais des ruraux d'aujourd'hui sont moins ruraux qu'avant.

De Calan's basic social project has been realized. But as for the postwar vision that motivated such an effort—the heroic saga of pushing thousands of peasants into the factory while keeping them rural—its time has passed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

An Honest and Individualized Worker: Citroën-Rennes and the Contestation of Decentralized Industry

In 1956, Michel Phlipponneau told fellow unionists at the CFTC, "vous allez justement me traiter de négrier au service du capitalisme."[1] Phlipponneau was a top industrial expert at the CELIB, and he had just finished the regional coalition's manual for outside investors, the *Inventaire des possibilités d'implantations industrielles en Bretagne*. The *Inventaire* was an advertisement of cheap and docile labor. It told Paris manufacturers that they were,

> assurés de pouvoir recruter une main-d'œuvre abondante, dont les salaires demeurent nettement inférieurs aux salaires parisiens, [et que] leur bonne marche ne risque guère d'être gênée par des mouvements sociaux, alors que dans la région parisienne une simple grève des transports perturbe l'activité de milliers d'entreprises.[2]

Such cynical advertisements became commonplace among provincial boosters in the 1950s. Phlipponneau, however, was also a union activist—an odd position from which to promise exploitable workers to outside corporations. He thus confided his misgivings to fellow unionists before publishing the *Inventaire*. They were unfazed by the document. "La réponse fut immédiate et unanime," Phlipponneau later recounted, "...'Ne t'en fais pas mon vieux, amène nous d'abord des industries, on s'arrangera ensuite.'"[3]

However, the shift from cheap-labor baiting to promoting higher salaries and worker empowerment proved harder than expected. Fifteen years after writing the *Inventaire*, Phlipponneau offered a somber evaluation of the decentralization policy he had done so much to pioneer. Brittany had attracted a wave of decentralized factories,

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[1] Michel Phlipponneau, *Au Joint français, les ouvriers bretons* (Saint-Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Bretagne, 1972), 8.
[2] Michel Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités d'implantations industrielles en Bretagne* (Rennes: CELIB, 1956), 35.
[3] Phlipponneau, *Au Joint français*, 8.

but its unions had scored few victories on the front of labor empowerment. Phlipponneau concluded,

> mes camarades syndicalistes étaient sans doute trop optimistes en sous-estimant la force des entreprises capitalistes extérieures qui allaient effectivement chercher à exploiter au maximum la main-d'œuvre bretonne et réussir souvent à empêcher toute pénétration syndicale dans leurs établissements bretons, à commencer par la plus importante, Citroën.

Attracting outside industry had not saved the provinces, Phlipponneau argued. On the contrary, it had contaminated social and political relations in Brittany. In their enthusiasm for new jobs, Breton unionists had underestimated the degree to which

> le succès des méthodes [anti-syndicales] adoptées par les entreprises extérieures allait inciter nombre de chefs d'entreprises bretonnes, supportant jusqu'alors le syndicalisme comme un mal nécessaire, à adopter des procédés identiques avec le bienveillant appui du personnel politique traditionnel.

Things were so bad, he concluded in 1972, that only a "décolonisation totale, économique et culturelle autant que politique," could restore Western workers' power and "dignité."[4]

Phlipponneau's account of his 1956 exchange with fellow unionists may have been apocryphal.[5] Nonetheless, it highlights the conflicting goals of industrialization programs in rural regions. Attracting outside manufacturers was the only way to correct Brittany's glut of available labor, which depressed wages and limited workers' options, but it was often at odds with the goal of obtaining decent salaries and working conditions. This tension was particularly strong in Rennes. On the one hand, Henri Fréville's municipality, the Chamber of Commerce, and the CELIB were all fervent proponents of rapid industrialization, and the arrival of Citroën revealed the success of their strategy: with over 14,000 workers in the early 1970s, the automaker created more jobs in the region than any other Parisian manufacturer. On the other hand, Citroën also brought with it an exceptionally authoritarian factory regime and ferocious anti-unionism. Despite the Breton boosters' eagerness to provide a pro-business environment, this Parisian model of labor relations was a delicate transplant in Rennes' more temperate

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[4] Ibid., 8-10, 14.

[5] If the booster experienced a crisis of conscience about his role in helping outside corporations take control of Brittany's labor market in the 1950s, the archives contain no trace of it. And in 1956, Phlipponneau's fellow unionists' did raise complaints of the *Inventaire*'s cheap-labor language: see the minutes of the Commission régionale d'expansion économique, 7 November 1955, Rennes municipal archives, 1078W/25.

provincial climate. Brittany may have been rural, centrist, and Catholic, but it nonetheless had a progressive Christian tradition. In fitting with the broader social Catholic influence on *aménagement du territoire*, Breton activists demanded that industrialization bring human development, not just economic growth.[6] And the sheer breadth of the CELIB's regional development coalition—an ecumenical *union sacrée* that contained unions and Left politicians as well as business and boosters—ensured that the conflict between growth and development had a forum for debate.

Phlipponneau himself embodied these tensions, and his ideological evolution shows how quickly provincial assumptions and aspirations could change, as communities confronted the realities of industrial decentralization. A university geographer, he began working for the CELIB in 1952, just after its creation. For a decade, Phlipponneau pursued regional boosterism with a staunch pragmatism, rationalizing Brittany's resources for the profit of outside investors. Around 1962, however, Phlipponneau's stance shifted. New companies repressed workers and unions; the CELIB and the national government refused measures that would have allowed Brittany to take a higher road to development. The geographer thus entered into political opposition. He quit the CELIB in 1964, adopted a Marxist analysis of regional economies, and joined the New Left.[7] He now condemned a development model he had helped invent just fifteen years earlier.

A wave of contestation hit decentralized branch plants in May 1968. The workers' movements seemed like a ratification of Phlipponneau's new stance. Provincial workers, it seemed, were sick of the poor conditions and condescension offered by Parisian headquarters—and were finally ready to take over their new factories. In Brittany, the emblem of this contestation was the strike at the "Joint français," a rubber-

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[6] It was the Dominican activist Louis Joseph Lebret who first theorized the difference between growth and development, in 1953. In the words of the economist Joseph Lajugie, Lebret opposed *mise en valeur*—with its emphasis on increasing production, productivity, and profits—and development: "quelque chose de plus vaste et de plus humain, à la fois...C'est une conception 'globaliste,' qui recouvre et dépasse tous les concepts partiels déjà évoqués, pour aboutir à une politique économique où l'homme tient la première place, à la fois, comme sujet des besoins et comme agent de la mise en valeur." Joseph Lajugie, Claude Lacour, and Pierre Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Dalloz, 1985), 83.
[7] Vincent Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons: Conflits d'usines, conflits identitaires en Bretagne dans les années 68* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 143, 156, 167.

joint factory in Saint-Brieuc. The strike elicited from Phlipponneau a mea culpa that must be fairly unique in the annals of postwar boosterism:

> Pour avoir rédigé en 1956 un inventaire...destiné à faire connaître aux entreprises extérieures les possibilités que leur offre une Bretagne nouvelle...j'ai une dette à acquitter envers mes camarades ouvriers du Joint français dont la ténacité bien bretonne a donné à ce conflit une dimension nationale en posant le problème de la décentralisation industrielle, celui de l'exploitation de la main-d'œuvre provinciale par les usines pirates installées par des firmes multinationales en régions sous-développées.[8]

Phlipponneau then proceeded to catalogue the ills of a decentralization policy based on the offer of subsidies, business-friendly cooperation, and cheap labor—in fact, all the measures he had helped create fifteen years earlier.

If the Joint français strike represented the hope of empowering provincial workers, it was Citroën-Rennes that symbolized the limits of that aspiration.[9] Brittany's biggest employer was essentially union-free and strike-free. Indeed, it had the dubious distinction of being one of the few French auto factories that never walked out in 1968. The company's president, Pierre Bercot, therefore boasted of having found "une population laborieuse, honnête et très individualisée."[10] Many observers agreed with him. Citroën's rural recruits seemed to personify the various social qualities that make for a docile workforce. Most were former peasants with little union tradition, raised in a heavily Catholic region that traditionally emphasized respect for authority. A Citroën salary had allowed them to shift out of abject rural poverty. And they lived dispersed in the countryside, often with one foot still on the farm.

Understandably, then, many observers concluded that Citroën's rural workers were mired in a culture of docility. In reality, however, their submission had to be

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[8] Phlipponneau, *Au Joint français*, 7. The mea culpa was short-lived. After being brought into Rennes city hall as director of urban development in 1977, Phlipponneau drifted back to the center. In 1993, he offered Brittany's Regional Council new recommendations to revive the West's industrialization, in which he once again hailed the 1956 *Inventaire* as a pioneering piece of dynamic boosterism. In 1993, he also praised Brittany's pro-business climate and cooperative labor, now well-prized by Japanese firms. Michel Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton 1950-2000* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1993), 9-12.

[9] Michel Phlipponneau, *La Gauche et les régions* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1967).

[10] Pierre Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën: Document privé* (Paris: La Pensée universelle, 1977), 58-59.

actively cultivated, maintained, and ultimately imposed.[11] Citroën went about these tasks with ruthless efficiency. The company's policy of systematic intimidation routinely crossed over into the violation of workers' rights, taking advantage of gaping loopholes in France's labor legislation. Citroën's repression was effective in the workplace, but at the cost of shocking many in the Rennes community. The new car factories were initially hailed as Brittany's savior, but within a decade they came to symbolize the social failure of branch-plant industrialization. Like Phlipponneau, many in Rennes were questioning the development model invented in the early 1950s, based on low wages, the refusal of labor rights, and the perpetuation of the rural West's most backwards traditions. Bercot's workers may have been absent from May 1968, but his factories had precociously sparked a critique of industrial decentralization that would be developed in these years of contestation.

1. Power in the Factory

In 1951, Pierre Bercot chose Rennes to house Citroën's new factory because of the region's weak labor movement and business-friendly politics. Yet the move was more complex than the commonplace image of industrial decentralization, in which a company flees the Paris region's strong working-class for an anti-labor periphery.
To begin with, if Rennes was not a working-class bastion, it was no center of anti-labor activism either. The Communist-affiliated CGT (Confédération générale du travail) had a solid presence among the city's metalworkers; the more conservative CFTC (Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens) was better implanted in the surrounding countryside.[12] Even the city's civic elites—beginning with the mayor, Henri Fréville—boasted a vigorous political tradition of social Catholicism. Citroën, meanwhile, had perfected its union repression and workplace authority in Paris, where the system worked with dreadful efficiency. And if it intended to exploit regional differences in labor strength, the broader framework for that struggle—work laws and the administration that applied them—were national institutions. In short, if decentralization

[11] On the question of how to weigh a culture of docility versus the structural superiority of authoritarian employers in explaining weak labor contestation, I am partly borrowing from Daniel Letwin, "Labor Relations in the Industrializing South," in *A Companion to the American South*, ed. John B. Boles (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 424.
[12] Jacqueline Sainclivier, *L'Ille-et-Vilaine, 1918-1958: Vie politique et sociale* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1996), 362-364.

was part of the automaker's strategy for labor control, Citroën's violation of workers' rights was a national problem—not a rural or regional one. Bercot was not so much fleeing a well-organized workforce as transplanting a proven model of authoritarian relations to seemingly fertile soil. And far from taking advantage of an anti-labor periphery, Citroën was in fact contaminating Rennes' relatively progressive labor relations with aggressive strategies imported from Paris.

Citroën's authoritarian regime was effective inside the factory. It eliminated all opposition voices and maintained a general climate of fear—strategies that kept workers in line for decades. Management's success owed a good deal to the cooperation of pubic authorities. They helped the automaker craft the job market to favor labor docility and stood by while it disempowered workers of their basic rights. Citroën suffered one main setback, however: it failed to hide its repression from the broader community. This failure was largely the doing of labor activists. Thanks to the support of the unions' Rennes locals and national federations, a handful of activists fought an uphill battle to organize the car factories and even scored one historic victory in the 1965 workplace elections. Their actions undermined management's myth that rural workers were inherently allergic to unions. It also forced the broader Rennes community to recognize Citroën's authoritarianism—raising the question of whether public pressure should be used to force changes in the workplace.

Laying the Foundations

Establishing control over the workplace began with creating the social conditions favorable to a docile workforce. Rural Brittany may have provided fertile ground for this task, but Bercot's "individualized" worker had to be carefully cultivated. Citroën pursued that goal through the strategies we saw in the last chapter. It recruited exclusively in the countryside, avoided areas of union activity, and vigorously screened out potential troublemakers by investigating candidates' backgrounds and reputations among regional elites. Finally, the automaker took control over the job market. It obtained a quasi-monopoly over unskilled male workers in the Rennes area; when Brittany's rural labor reserve proved shallower than expected, it expanded workforce, creating the glut of wage seekers that Breton boosters had originally promised.

State and local officials helped the company in all of these tasks. Their orchestration of the labor market is a good demonstration of the fact that public intervention had concrete ramifications on power in the factory. First of all, by ensuring Citroën's monopoly of Rennes' workforce, public authorities maintained workers' central motivation for cowing to management authority: a lack of local alternatives.[13] A unionist made this point clearly in a 1965 letter to his CFDT local, explaining why he was tearing up his union card.[14] The only other option, he wrote, would be to "quitter Citroën comme certains délégués qui l'ont déjà fait, mais peut-être savaient-ils depuis longtemps où aller, ce n'est pas mon cas. Je m'excuse de prendre cette décision mais je dois la prendre si je veux garde[r] ma situation et celle de ma femme [à Citroën]."[15]

La Janais' awesome labor demand could have reversed this situation, shifting power back in camp of workers. In fact, during the critical recruitment shortfalls of the early 1960s, various observers believed that management concessions were imminent. Local businesses feared that La Janais would raise its wages, "stealing" their workers. Citroën might also have given up its policy of screening out workers with a union background, which counted for a substantial amount of lost labor.[16] Last but not least, unions hoped that management would be forced to improve workplace conditions, since La Janais' poor public image convinced many potential workers not to apply.[17] By expanding Citroën's labor pool, however, public authorities eliminated the need for such concessions.

This orchestration of the labor market highlights the contradictions in the position of progressive boosters like Michel Phlipponneau. In his later accounts, Phlipponneau recalls the hopes of the 1950s that industrialization would gradually create a virtuous cycle for Breton workers. Outside investors would initially head west to take advantage of low wages and weak unions, but over time the increased demand for labor would shift

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[13] Xavier Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière dans les années 68: Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 148, 156.
[14] The CFDT split off from the CFTC in 1964, taking the majority of the latter's adherents with it.
[15] Anonymous, undated letter in ADIV 111J/337.
[16] Directeur départemental du travail to Ministre du Travail, 13 June 1969, ADIV 1488W/4; "Citroën souhaite que ses ouvriers de l'usine de Rennes continuent d'habiter à la campagne," unidentified press clipping, ADIV 111J/379.
[17] *Unité ouvrière* (newsletter of the CGT-Citroën), no. 2, ADIV 111J/379.

the job market in workers' favor.[18] But Phlipponneau was actively stacking the cards against such an outcome. Moreover, if the details of his collusion with new manufacturers were kept behind closed doors, the spirit that motivated it was not. In the *Inventaire*, Phlipponneau openly proclaimed that the virtuous cycle described above would be a long time coming. The sheer glut of available labor in Brittany, he assured Parisian manufacturers, guaranteed that new industrialization would not provoke the upward spiral of wages and unionization "qu'escomptent les syndicats ouvriers et que peuvent craindre certains chefs d'entreprise."[19]

Phlipponneau made a specific reference to Citroën. He boasted that Brittany had fulfilled Citroën's recruitment needs "sans perturber les caractères du marché du travail, sans déterminer une élévation locale des salaires."[20] Elsewhere in the *Inventaire*, he condoned many of the other tactics that Citroën used to craft a docile workforce, such as screening out troublemakers. "Les demandes d'emploi sont si abondantes [en Bretagne]," he informed prospective employers, "qu'il est possible d'abord d'exercer un choix non seulement sur le plan de la qualification professionnelle, mais aussi sur le plan médical et moral."[21] The *Inventaire* even furnished data on local rates of unionization, strikes, and political majorities. This was clearly designed to help manufacturers steer clear of towns where troublemakers were likely, as Citroën was doing.[22]

Phlipponneau therefore had good reason to feel squeamish about his boosterist activities: by helping Citroën design its ideal workforce, he and other Breton elites were deliberately sacrificing the interests of new auto workers in favor of corporate profits. They did so in the name of pursuing a broader regional interest. Exploitable labor was Brittany's best-selling product, and kick starting the region's industrialization seemed to

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[18] Phlipponneau, *Au Joint français*, 8. Sociologists working for the DATAR told government officials to expect this virtuous cycle of increased labor demand and power: DATAR, *Décentralisation industrielle et relations de travail* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1976), 4. On such movements in the U.S., see Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 4, 62-65, 71; James Cobb, *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936-1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 114-115.
[19] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 29-42. On such advertising in the U.S. South, see Cobb, *The Selling of the South*, 96-98, 103-105.
[20] Phlipponneau, *Inventaire des possibilités*, 67.
[21] Ibid., 35, 39.
[22] The *Inventaire* indicated that, "Un chef d'entreprise peut désirer connaître l'influence exercée par les différents syndicats ouvriers...[et] par la structure politique de la ville où [il songe] à installer une usine." Ibid., 33-37.

require a special effort to package it for outside investors.[23] Whatever their intentions, however, the actions regional leaders took to aid the arrival of new factories durably stacked the field of labor relations in management's favor. By the time Phlipponneau called upon Breton workers to take back their factories, in the 1960s and 1970s, he had helped ensure that they would have an uphill battle.

The Abdication of Workers' Rights

From the moment it opened its first Rennes factory in 1952, Citroën engaged in a vicious repression of unions and routinely violated workers' rights in the factory. The cynicism with which management flaunted commonly admitted labor ideals shocked many in the Rennes community, but public authorities mostly stood by in silence. The result was that for three decades, few Citroën workers dared to contest their management and those who did almost invariably lost.

Company executives felt no obligation to respect workers' legal rights, let alone the spirit of power-sharing conveyed by national labor accords and government statements of principle. In the words of Jean-Louis Loubet, the historian of the French auto industry, Pierre Bercot publicly denounced, "tout ce qui gêne le chef d'entreprise, soit pêle-mêle le marxisme, la démocratie qui, 'ayant usé tous ses charmes, doit disparaître,' le suffrage universel, l'État dirigiste, les syndicats qui 'n'ont pas de fondements valables.'"[24] To put it mildly, then, Citroën had little patience for the notion that 1936, 1945, or 1968 had created an era of more consensual labor relations in French industry.[25]

Citroën's signature repertoire of labor control was well publicized and changed little over time. Unions were systematically repressed. Quai de Javel claimed to replace them by special management officials, the *agents de secteur*, who served as liaisons between workers and executives. These agents funneled up complaints, funneled down

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[23] As Phlipponneau wrote in 1953, "c'est l'argument de la main-d'œuvre qui peut agir le plus efficacement sur le choix des industriels." Comité d'étude et de liaison des intérêts bretons, *Rapport d'ensemble sur un plan d'aménagement, de modernisation et d'équipement de la Bretagne, 1954-1958* (Paris: Imprimerie la Mouette, 1953), 71.

[24] Jean-Louis Loubet, "Pierre Bercot," in *Dictionnaire historique des patrons français*, ed. Jean-Claude Daumas (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 76.

[25] Xavier Vigna shows that the aftermath of 1968, and the postwar years more broadly, brought no golden age of labor relations—and no respite for unions from business and even government attacks. Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 225-229, 303-305.

paternalist patronage, and kept workers in line. Citroën's strategy for defending this system against union challenges was based on a simple principle: work around the law. The best defense against potential trouble was preventive action. Management officials kept up a constant surveillance in the factory. Employees who were tempted to take a union tract as they left the plant or to vote in workplace elections did so under these agents' conspicuous gaze. Likewise, the company planted and rewarded "finks" (*mouchards*) in buses, the company's worker dormitories, and rural villages, so that employees learned to distrust all but their closest acquaintances.[26]

When troublemakers were identified, factory directors generally extorted their resignation through all means necessary. During long "confessionals," managers threatened employees and their family members with being put on the black list among regional employers. Die-hards were transferred to punishment posts. These demeaning and physically demanding jobs pushed many to leave; those who did not could be legally fired for unprofessional work when they failed to fulfill the unrealistic production minima Citroën outlined for these jobs.[27] The company also used paternalist patronage to its full potential. Management withheld promotions, special privileges like house loans and preferential rates on new cars, and even pay from troublemakers.[28] Inversely, it rewarded employees who quickly recanted and tore up their union card or quit their elected post. One CFDT activist wrote from Citroën's Caen factory—where he had been quarantined—to say that he was being paid a hefty 25,000 francs per month, as compared

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[26] Labor Inspectors in Rennes largely recycled the same analyses year after year. A good starting point is the "Note sur les problèmes liés à l'exercice du droit syndical à la Société Citroën," undated, ADIV 511W166. See also Alexandre Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église et liberté syndicale, un exemple concret: L'affaire Frémin" (masters thesis, Université de Haute Bretagne Rennes II), 89, 92. On the system's operation in Citroën's Paris factories, see the report "Situation sociale et syndicale à Citroën," 1 April 1966, CFDT archives 1 B 416. On its Caen factory, see Patrick Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne et l'espace français: Le cas de la région de Caen, 1950-1980" (doctoral thesis, Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, 1982), 240-241. An ACO note gave a vivid description of finks: "Dans un quartier de Bruz, une quinzaine de Foyers appartenant à Citroën résident. Parmi eux, deux espions inconnus. Il s'ensuit sans arrêt, une suspicion mutuelle. Un voisin, rendant visite à un autre Citroën se voit ensuite appelé au bureau. On lui demande s'il a l'habitude de voisiner ce qu'ils racontent entre eux: syndicat, politique, etc. Ambiance de méfiance dans la Cité." Undated note, ACO archives, Favrais papers, dossier "Faits vécus."

[27] The Conseil des prud'hommes concluded that such jobs imposed "des normes inhumaines" on workers, in its decision on the case of F. Le Thomas, October 1965, ADIV 111J/337.

[28] Ibid. One worker wrote to his *agent de secteur*, "Comme promis lors de l'entrevue que j'ai eue avec vous le vendredi 8 juillet, je vous envoie ma carte syndicale pour avoir mes papiers de voiture." Charles Corbel, 11 July 1966, ADIV 111J/337. See also for example the threat to withhold pay from managers who vote in elections, Renseignements généraux note, 1 October 1965, ADIV 511W/164.

to his 4,000 franc base salary. "Que ne ferait pas la direction pour faire taire quelqu'un!" he exclaimed.[29]

By maintaining a generalized climate of fear and the sense that getting on in the factory meant bowing to company rules, Citroën kept the rank and file in line. However, when all else failed, it did not hesitate to summarily fire troublemakers on trumped-up charges, often with the help of planted evidence or the complicit testimonies of management agents. Finally, management reserved its most aggressive, often illicit activities for that kernel of unrepentant union activists who could not be legally fired. These tactics ranged from quotidian harassment—preventing workers' representatives from doing their rounds or destroying union tracts and posters—to a series of violent "commando" activities. Citroën agents were charged with assault, death threats, and even attempted murder for running labor activists off the road with their cars. Indeed, when union organizers gathered on the road outside the factories to distribute tracts, the prefect sent in the police as much to protect them from management attacks as to spy on their activities.[30]

These activities were an obvious attack on workers' rights, but for the most part Citroën's judicial record remained clean. Individual management agents took the fall for the dirtiest tricks. Meanwhile, only the most courageous workers spoke out, and those who did often got little further. In many cases, the Inspection could not disprove management accusations of unprofessional conduct. Even if a worker won his case and got his job back, he could expect a blocked career. In 1966, a labor activist concluded that fighting the layoff of activists was a lost cause, lamenting that, "Un gars de Citroën même réintégré, il n'a pas d'avenir."[31] A leitmotif of the Labor Inspectors' reports was

[29] "Jacques," letters of 7 July 1965 and "mardi 31," ADIV 111J/339. A less loyal union activist negotiated a promotion for himself and a job for his wife in return for his resignation as a worker representative. Anonymous to Direction Citroën, 24 March 1966, ADIV 111J/337.

[30] See for instance the CGT litigation against Le Nouvel and against the CFT (Renseignements généraux note of 2 March 1970), in ADIV 511W/165.
Still, things did not get as bad as in Caen, where CFT agents shot and killed a union organizer, Pierre Maître, in 1976. Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 236.

[31] ACO, "Rencontre de responsables," 12 January 1966, ACO archives, Favrais papers.

therefore that their hands were tied: the company largely undermined workers' rights while operating within legal limits.[32]

Unions mostly shared this assessment, but denounced its root causes: the gaping loopholes in France's labor laws and the cozy relationship between top government and corporate officials. Labor leaders demanded that the state do more. The Labor Inspection, they said, should send enough inspectors to effectively supervise company elections, force Citroën and wronged workers to meet and confront their stories, and protect employees who did come forward.[33] But for the most part, the administration sat by and recorded workers' disempowerment.[34] Some state officials went beyond mute passiveness to collude more actively with the company. In their memoirs, Bercot and Philippe de Calan, the longtime director of the La Janais plant, fondly remembered their cozy relations with the regional prefects at Rennes. The prefects sent police to disperse activists distributing union tracts—kicking them off public land in the name of public security—and disarmed the most zealous Labor Inspectors.[35] This relationship periodically bordered on veritable class collaboration, as we will see.

Whatever its mixture of passive powerlessness and active complicity, the state abdicated its role of effectively regulating labor relations at La Janais. In 1963, the Labor Director of Ille-et-Vilaine wrote to his superiors in Paris, "l'autorité patronale s'exerce encore sans contrôle effectif de nos services."[36] His successors would still be making the same complaint when the Left came to power two decades later. At its core, then, the lack of contestation at the Rennes auto plants was not a problem of Breton docility. Faced with a company that openly assumed its authoritarian model and a state that

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[32] "Note sur les problèmes liés à l'exercice du droit syndical à la Société Citroën," undated, ADIV 511W166; Directeur départemental du travail report of 23 November 1967, to Ministre du Travail and prefect, ADIV 511W/164.
[33] CFDT Redon to sous-préfet de Redon, 5 January 1966, ADIV 111J/337.
[34] The prefect's intelligence services (*Renseignements généraux*), for example, told him, "Que peut faire un salarié à qui, par exemple, on interdit d'aller voter aux élections professionnelles ou s'il prend un tract syndical lors d'une distribution? S'il porte plainte à l'Inspecteur du Travail, une enquête sera déclenchée et il encourr[a] les foudres de son employeur." "Note sur les problèmes liés à l'exercice du droit syndical à la Société Citroën," undated, ADIV 511W166.
[35] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 20, 24-25.
[36] Directeur départemental du travail to Ministre du Travail, 26 March 1963, ADIV 1488W/123.

refused to regulate it, a Citroën worker was all but forced into "une sorte d'abdication et d'abandon d'une partie de ses droits et notamment de son droit d'expression."[37]

"A tout prix il faut réussir l'opération Citroën"

Management repression ensured that unions never gained a major foothold in the Rennes auto factories. However, the CGT and the CFTC/CFDT made several major organizing efforts and maintained a minimum presence in the factories. In doing so, they politicized company repression, debunking the myth that the lack of collective organization at Citroën resulted from rural workers' inherent individualism.

Organizing efforts were heavily supported from the outside. The unions' local and departmental activists, national metalworking federations, and the Communist Party all aided several dozen organizers in the factory.[38] Understandably, Rennes' unions greeted Citroën's arrival with mixed feelings. On the one hand, confronting Citroën's efficient machinery of labor repression was a daunting prospect. In 1952, as the first Citroën plant was poised to open its doors, the CFTC local admitted, "S'il faut travailler à l'image des syndicalistes de chez 'Michelin' ce ne sera pas de la rigolade."[39] On the other hand, the new auto factories represented an unprecedented opportunity for union recruitment.[40] Beyond the question of Citroën's workers, meanwhile, the unions' fight to organize the new car factories was a broader battle over labor relations in the region. Since Citroën dwarfed Ille-et-Vilaine's other industrial employers, it had a determinate influence on the department's wage negotiations. It also set the tone for industrial relations throughout Rennes, since local employers imitated Citroën's repressive strategies, just as labor leaders had feared.[41]

Given the auto factories' broader impact on regional labor, it was thus unthinkable that, whatever their trepidation, the unions would not make a major effort to organize Citroën-Rennes. They launched their campaign immediately upon the first

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[37] Ibid. For other statements of powerlessness, see Directeur départemental du travail to Ministre du Travail, 26 March 1963, ADIV 1488W/123.
[38] Joseph Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," (Paris, ca. 2008), 3-4.
[39] CFTC Syndicat Métaux Rennes, 23 May 1952, ADIV 111J/68; UD CFTC Commission administrative, 9 July 1954, ADIV 111J/99.
[40] On unionism in Ille-et-Vilaine, see Sainclivier, *L'Ille-et-Vilaine*, 347-371.
[41] Inspecteur départemental du travail J. Bridge, "Conventions d'adaptation FNE/SA," to Ministre du Travail, 8 April 1975, 1169W/1.

factory's opening. However, their fears were soon realized. Citroën became the "cauchemar" of Rennes' labor movement, as management fiercely beat back unionization effort.[42] In 1954, the CFTC and the CGT obtained an election for workers' representatives (*délégués du personnel*) in Citroën first plant in Rennes, the Barre-Thomas. They put forward a slate of six candidates, all of whom were elected. But after just a few months of intense repression, not a single representative remained in the factory.[43] The unions withdrew, but they revived their effort after the announcement of much larger La Janais factory in 1959. The assembly plant's vast size raised the stakes of their struggle. "A tout prix il faut réussir l'opération Citroën," CFTC leaders recognized in 1960.[44] However, their early efforts were again thwarted, as nascent union cells were infiltrated and dismantled by management agents. More than a decade after its arrival, Citroën-Rennes thus remained essentially union-free.

The factories also remained without the two foundations of collective bargaining: workers' representatives and a *comité d'entreprise*, a bilateral committee that was supposed to ensure employees' participation in workforce decisions and social programs. These institutions were required by law, but for over a decade Citroën simply ignored this obligation. In 1965, it finally received a government order to hold elections, after the CFDT and CGT directly pressured the prime minister on the matter during his visit to Rennes. The episode reveals how much the application of labor laws depended on the government will.[45] It also signaled the renewed determination of Rennes' union locals, which had received money and organizers from their national metalworking federations to revive the Citroën campaign.[46] Finally, the elections reflected the state of the labor market. As unions had hoped, management recognized that it needed to improve La Janais' poor public image in order to surmount its recruitment shortfall.[47]

Citroën's direction also seemed confident that few of its rural workers would dare to vote.[48] On this point, the results surprised all parties involved. Despite management

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[42] Réunion générale des syndicats de Rennes, 9 March 1962, ADIV 111J/429.
[43] Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," 2-3.
[44] Minutes of the Union départementale CFTC d'Ille-et-Vilaine, 11 September 1960, ADIV 111J/429.
[45] Hochet to Soulat, 2 July 1965, ADIV 111J/339; Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," 4.
[46] Ibid., 3-4.
[47] JOC-ACO meeting, 11 September 1965, ACO archives, Favrais papers.
[48] Renseignements généraux note, 27 September 1965, ADIV 511W/164.

intimidation, 76 percent of workers turned out to the ballot box. To boot, "Citroën's peasants" gave the CGT a majority of workers' representatives.[49] The Communist union's success was not a question of ideology, but rather of its ability to wither company repression. Both union locals used clandestine organizing techniques learned during the wartime Resistance, but the CGT did so with more efficiency.[50]

The 1965 elections were a potential turning point. They thwarted management's myth that rural workers were by nature hostile to union representation. Indeed, they turned assumptions about rural docility on their head. Such a strong union victory "ne s'est jamais vu dans un Etablissement Citroën," as a CFDT leader pointed out to the Minister of Labor.[51] The prefect's information service (the *Renseignements généraux*) likewise reported that "les dirigeants parisiens de Citroën ont été très surpris de la vigueur des réactions syndicales sur place, car ils s'attendaient à ce que cette main-d'œuvre 'rurale et catholique', 'fasse moins d'histoires que la main-d'œuvre parisienne.'"[52] By handing unions a historic victory and installing a full slate of representatives who had special protections under the law, the 1965 vote raised hopes of finally changing Citroën's authoritarian regime.[53]

The CFDT even thought the Rennes campaign might provide the model for a new union strategy in rural France. At the national level, several leaders of its metalworkers' federation, the FGM (Fédération Générale de la Métallurgie), wanted to kick off a nationwide campaign to organize recently industrialized regions. During the 1950s, the FGM had focused on France's traditional industrial bastions. Now it was time for "[des] efforts méthodiques de couverture vers [les] régions moins industrialisées...en vue de constituer des assises nouvelles."[54] A union tract even claimed that the Rennes campaign

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[49] The union's Communist support and clandestine efficiency had turned out to be an asset. One of the CFTC/CFDT leaders in the Citroën factories, Yannick Frémin, had flocked to the rival union shortly before the elections out of frustration with the repeated decimation of his fellow activists. Frémin's Christian bona fides brought the CGT a new legitimacy in rural milieus.

[50] Union départementale CFDT, "Réflexions sur l'action Citroën," ca. 1964, ADIV 111J/156; *Unité ouvrière*, no. 2, ADIV 111J/379.

[51] Soulat to Ministère du Travail, 6 October 1965, ADIV 111J/337.

[52] Renseignements généraux note 7 January 1967, ADIV 511W/164.

[53] There was even a short strike that netted 70 percent of workers in the finishing workshop, in March 1966. *Regards*, 6 March 1966, Joseph Cussonneau private archives.

[54] Minutes of Bureau FGM, 15-16 April 1965 and 7 January 1966, CFDT archives, 1 B 45; secrétariat Métal, 1 February 1966, CFDT archives, 1 B 49. The FGM had previously been called the Fédération de la Métallurgie and the Fédération française des syndicats de la métallurgie et parties similaires.

was the first time members had helped comrades in both another company and another region in such an effort.[55] At the regional level, meanwhile, Citroën-Rennes had showed the utility of pushing organizing efforts beyond the workplace to reach rural workers in their dispersed residences. In preparation for the 1965 elections, Rennes' union locals had held meetings in villages situated dozens of miles away from the factory. This tactic had been effective in getting out the vote.[56]

However, an unprecedented campaign of repression following the 1965 elections once again shut down hopes for reordering power in the factory. Citroën's signature mix of targeted layoffs, harassment, and buying off the least determined activists worked with brutal efficiency.[57] The newly elected workers' representatives were all but eliminated in a matter of months; only three out of sixteen remained two years later. The hundreds of union members recruited in 1965 tore up their cards.[58] In the meantime, Citroën decided that if it could no longer ignore workplace elections, it would turn them to its advantage. It organized lists of "independent" candidates who received management's approbation and material support—including its surveillance of workplace voting. The Labor Inspection first tried to increase its oversight of company elections but quickly abandoned its efforts, for fear of lending legitimacy to what was clearly a rigged affair.[59]

The next elections for workers' representatives, in September 1967, dramatically underscored the extent of management's crackdown. In the first round of voting, employees could only cast ballots for members of nationally recognized unions, not the "independent" candidates. Just twenty workers turned out to the polls. Nine of them were the CFDT and CGT candidates themselves.[60] The historic union success of 1965 had turned out to be a fluke, rather than a turning point in workplace relations.

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[55] "Connaissez-vous Citroën ? Suite," undated tract, CFDT archives, 1 B 416.
[56] "Réflexions sur l'action Citroën," undated note, ADIV 111J/156. See the dossier on these meetings in ADIV 111J/339.
[57] Soulat, Secrétaire fédéral, to Lucas, Secrétaire général adjoint, 9 February 1966, CFDT archives, 1 B 416.
[58] On the decline in numbers, see the Renseignements généraux notes of 27 September 1965 and 30 April 1966, ADIV 511W/164. The CFDT kept a collection of workers' letters on the repression of this period, in ADIV 111J/337.
[59] Inspecteur principal du travail to Directeur départemental du travail, 23 August 1973, 511W/166.
[60] Renseignements généraux note of 21 September 1967, ADIV 511W/166.

2. The Battle for Rennes

If Citroën's repression effectively eliminated a meaningful union presence from the factories, it also definitively altered the company's public image in Rennes. Brittany's press and politicians had overwhelmingly hailed the automaker's arrival as a form of regional salvation, and they long euphemized its authoritarian social model. But 1965 dissipated any remaining credibility in the company's claim that it engaged in social dialogue and respected workers' rights. Corporate repression shocked the Rennes community to the point that Citroën became a metonym for the broader ills of branch-plant industrialization.

In effect, the polemics over the car factories were often framed as the choice between two models of development. On the one hand, Citroën's supporters emphasized the need to preserve Rennes' business-friendly reputation, in order to boost job creation. On the other hand, its critics demanded that the community reject any industrialization that came at the cost of low salaries, the refusal of social dialogue, and the denial of "la dignité humaine," a catch-phrase of contestation in this Catholic region. Especially after the 1965 elections, then, a range of groups in thus saw the Citroën problem as an affair of the city, perhaps even of the region and the nation.

Our Daily Bread

In 1966, the Archbishop of Rennes, Monsignor Gouyon, proclaimed his "gratitude" to the Paris manufacturers who were building factories in Brittany. "A beaucoup d'hommes, elles procurent vraiment le pain quotidien." But Gouyon immediately added, "'l'homme ne vit pas seulement de pain,' ainsi que dit l'Evangile." Salaries alone could not assure social uplift. Breton workers also needed freedom, respect, and empowerment.[61] The Archbishop personified progressive Catholics' willingness to use religion to criticize Citroën and, more generally, the conditions of Brittany's new industrialization.

In his memoirs, Philippe de Calan, the director of La Janais, recalled company executives' surprise at finding such Christian resistance. He had expected that Citroën-

[61] Gouyon declaration, "Travailleurs et libertés syndicales," undated, Fréville papers, ADIV 52J/105, Frémin dossier.

Rennes' social project—especially its effort to keep workers in the countryside, which helped churchgoing in rural towns—

> seraient compris par le clergé local et les associations catholiques. J'en espérais même un accueil favorable. Je m'étais largement trompé et, à de rares exceptions près, je n'ai rencontré que méfiance, hostilité et refus du dialogue.[62]

In short, rural religion—and the Church hierarchy—were supposed to be a source of worker docility and pro-business elites, not of calls for the unionization of auto workers.

De Calan should not have been so surprised. Since the interwar years, social movements had increasingly used Christian ideals as a force for workers' uplift in Brittany. The Catholic workers movement ACO (Action Catholique Ouvrière) drew from the ranks of the youth organizations JAC and JOC (Jeunesse agricole catholique and Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne). It also kept close ties with the CFTC, even after the Christian union "deconfessionalized" in 1964.[63] This progressive wing of Breton Catholicism was the bane of Citroën. "Pour beaucoup [de ces Catholiques], le capitalisme est mauvais par définition," De Calan complained. "...J'ai ainsi découvert, ce à quoi je ne m'attendais pas, qu'une partie du clergé, la JAC, la JOC, le 'chrétien en milieu rural' n'étaient pas indifférents aux idées marxistes et j'en ai beaucoup souffert."[64]

In reality, religion played a more complex role than De Calan let on. Many progressive Christians complained that traditional religious education and rural churches still fostered the kind of submissiveness that Citroën hoped for. A member of the ACO described the stifling atmosphere of this rural Catholicism:

> [P]our moi qui suis passé par la JAC autrefois il est pénible de constater comment...les Catholiques très souvent pratiquants fuient devant leurs responsabilités sur le plan social...Je connais aujourd'hui de très braves camarades qui veulent encore bien mettre quelques pièces de monnaie dans la corbeille de M. le Curé le dimanche...Mais de se soucier dans quelle condition vit son voisin d'atelier c'est autre chose!

Citroën's labor repression only aggravated this rural tendency to individualism:

> Chez Citroën plus qu'ailleurs on ne connaît pas son voisin de travail sauf s'il habite dans la même commune et encore il faut se méfier de lui car il

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[62] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 16-17. See also Bercot, *Mes années aux usines Citroën*, 60.
[63] Sainclivier, *L'Ille-et-Vilaine*, 364-367, 385-386; Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 276.
[64] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs, 16-17.

> peut être un mouchard, on s'occupera encore moins de lui et on le fuira si l'on sait qu'il est syndiqué.[65]

All in all, the ACO activists argued, the religious traditions of Brittany's countryside were an obstacle to workers' empowerment. They complained of their flock's "conception de l'obéissance qui peut parfois être aveugle et inconditionnelle à l'autorité."[66]

The ACO began denouncing the repression at La Janais almost immediately after the factory's opening, thanks in part to several members' joint engagement with the CFTC. The ACO's leader in Rennes, Father Favrais, criticized the praise that Brittany's press and politicians heaped on the new assembly plant. He fired off letters to *La Croix* et *Ouest-France*. In full-page spreads, the newspapers had lauded Citroën for stopping the depopulation of the countryside and gushed at La Janais' modern facilities, which were supposed to provide better work conditions than the dreary factories of the Paris region. Father Favrais was less impressed. He told the newspapers that they would do better to report on Citroën's "atmosphère de caserne, de suspicion, de surveillance, d'odieux paternalisme."[67]

Favrais did just the kind of critical investigation that he demanded of journalists. Under his leadership, the ACO undertook studies and interviews with Citroën workers.[68] These findings culminated in a public critique of the company that went beyond the issue of Citroën's anti-union repression to condemn the entire model of branch-plant industrialization. In the Catholic activists' opinion, the auto factory oppressed individuals and contaminated the social life of the region. The ACO reported that the assembly line reduced workers to the role of "robots" and submitted them to "[des] conditions inhumaines de vie."[69] Many of the autoworkers also suffered from long commutes and their attempt to hold down two jobs, one on the farm and one in the factory. Finally, Citroën's employees were divided against each other by mutual suspicion and "la peur des 'mouchards.'" The result was that they prioritized individual

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[65] Exchange between anonymous (Soufflet?) and Joseph Richard, CFDT in ADIV 111J/339.
[66] Cited in Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église," 115.
[67] Cited in Ibid., 74-76.
[68] See the dossier "Faits vécus" in the ACO archives, Favrais papers.
[69] "Réflexions personnelles de l'aumônier diocésain d'ACO sur l'affaire Citroën," ADIV 52J/105; "Comité diocésain extraordinaire sur l'affaire Citroën," 30 December 1966, ADIV 52J/105.

concerns—job security and personal promotion—rather than the Christian obligations of solidarity and mutual aid.[70]

For these activists, solidarity meant one thing: workers had to unionize. The ACO actively supported the 1965 elections for workers' representatives. When Citroën responded with repression, Monsignor Gouyon got involved, taking an unusual public role in the defense of labor rights. In ACO tracts, a newspaper editorial, and even a special message he ordered to be read during Sunday sermons, the Archbishop insisted that all companies needed to engage in "un dialogue clair dont les organismes syndicaux constituent l'expression la plus normale." Firing unionists, he warned, "aux yeux du Christ et de l'Église, est une injustice!"[71]

A Development Model in Debate

Like Catholic activists, labor unions broadened their Citroën campaign into a general critique of industrial decentralization: Brittany needed to stop focusing on the number of jobs created and begin choosing employers who would commit to better conditions for working people. That was the CFDT's message to the mayor of Rennes, Henri Fréville:

> Certes, l'installation dans notre Région des Usines Citroën a pu vous apparaître, un moment donné, comme une solution intéressante au problème de l'emploi: tant de jeunes – de moins jeunes ! – condamnés à quitter la terre, trouveraient là le travail qui leur permettrait de vivre. Mais…nous pensons, M. le Maire, que le problème de l'emploi ne trouvera pas de réelle solution par la seule quantité des emplois offerts, mais seulement dans la mesure ou l'on permettra à des hommes et à des femmes de travailler dans des conditions normales de justice et de liberté.[72]

The unions called for increased public pressure on Citroën. The repression of 1965 and 1966 showed that change in the workplace was impossible without a political solution to curb corporate impunity. Both unions called on Fréville and the national government to withhold state subsidies and cooperation with Citroën until it engaged in an honest social dialogue.

This was not the first time Breton activists demanded that public incentives be leveraged to impose better conditions in decentralized factories. In its 1962 regional

[70] "Comité diocésain extraordinaire sur l'affaire Citroën," 30 December 1966, ADIV 52J/105.
[71] ACO tract, in the dossier "Citroën élection des délégués," 22-23 September 1965.
[72] CFDT to Fréville, 23 April 1966, ADIV 111J/337.

development plan, the CELIB called on the government to reserve decentralization subsidies for companies that signed a collective bargaining agreement with unions. Spearheaded by the CFTC, the measure revealed an early concern that cheap and docile labor was a poor basis for achieving regional uplift. Other measures in the 1962 plan went in the same sense. The CELIB called on the government to end geographic reductions in the national minimum wage. Last but not least, the regional coalition pushed for a rapid redistribution of infrastructure and public services to western France. By making the region a more attractive place to do business, it would have reduced Brittany's reliance on cheap labor as its main competitive advantage with more industrialized regions.[73]

Clearly, by the early 1960s socially minded boosters were trying to play on two fields at once. They demanded that national authorities set the stage for a more progressive era of industrial decentralization even as they continued advertising Brittany as "le pays de la main-d'œuvre" and rolling out the red carpet for Paris businessmen.[74] This mixed strategy was nowhere more evident than in their treatment of Citroën. The CELIB continued to spotlight the success of the Rennes car factories in its advertisements, but its 1962 propositions would have affected the automaker more than any other company in the region. In effect, Quai de Javel was the main recipient of government subsidies for Breton industrialization, as well as the main violator of workers' rights. Withholding the tens of millions of francs it received from the government would have carried much more weight than the periodic slap on the wrist that courts used to punish management's violations of labor laws.[75]

However, the CELIB's 1962 suggestions never got off the ground. The government never used its industrial subsidies as a tool for enforcing good labor practices, despite demands in this sense by Rennes' Labor Inspector, the Labor Ministry, and the Social and Economic Council.[76] The minimum wage was only equalized in 1968, under the pressure of protestors in the streets. And the government disappointed Breton

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[73] Michel Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne* (St. Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1970), 54-57, 365-367.
[74] See the pamphlet, "Bretagne: pays de main-d'œuvre," CAEF B/16350.
[75] Notes of a meeting with Michel Phlipponneau, 29 March (1961?), ADIV 111J/337.
[76] Inspecteur départemental du travail, opinion on subsidies, 3 September 1969, ADIV 1169W/1; CES opinion on *comités d'entreprise*, 24 February 1965, CFDT archives 1B/416; Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 365-367.

demands for a rapid redistribution of economic infrastructure. It was this last failure that pushed Michel Phlipponneau into the political opposition. He considered the CELIB's attempt to reconcile conflicting regional interests—the Left, labor unions, and progressive young farmers alongside business interests, traditional *notables*, and Gaullist economic policy—was no longer tenable. Depoliticized development was a falsehood; lines had to be drawn, even at the cost of the Bretons' renowned regional unity.

While government action lingered, the CFDT launched its own public campaign to pressure Citroën. In 1966, the union published a *Livre noir du trust Citroën*, which publicized the company's anti-social record, accompanied by a call to boycott the automaker until it agreed to fair union representation.[77] Boycotting was the concrete application of the CFDT's argument that Bretons should only accept good jobs, not blindly support whatever factory offered employment. Therein lay its main flaw. Even before the campaign began, the CFDT's national metallurgy council recognized, "Il peut être facile à une direction d'utiliser l'appel au boycott pour repousser du syndicalisme un certain nombre de travailleurs inconscients et individualistes qui se contentent d'avoir du travail, même s'ils l'exécutent comme des esclaves."[78] That is exactly what happened. Pierre Bercot claimed that the unions were asking workers, "de détruire eux-mêmes l'entreprise qui assure leur emploi." In the end, the CFDT campaign was a material success—Quai de Javel was inundated with thousands of boycott threats—but a strategic blunder. Rural Bretons remained desperate for work. They were no more enthusiastic about using outside pressure to slow down La Janais' production than they were about striking within the car plants.

Another episode did more than the *Livre noir* to politicize the Citroën problem in Rennes. It was "the Frémin affair."[79] Yannick Frémin was one of the main union activists in the auto plants. Late in 1966, a management agent punched him for trying to make his rounds as an elected worker representative. Not only did the company refuse to punish the agent, but it also fired Frémin. This decision was ratified by La Janais' *comité d'entreprise*, now safely in the hands of pro-management, "independent" workers. The Frémin affair provoked an uproar of unprecedented proportions in Rennes, for several

[77] A copy can be found in ADIV, Fréville papers, 52J/105.
[78] Conseil fédéral, minutes of 12-14 May 1966, CFDT archives, 1 B 416.
[79] See Raffoux, "Politique sociale de l'Église."

reasons. It confirmed the ease with which Citroën got around the letter of the law. Coming on the heels of the post-1965 repression, it was the straw the broke the camel's back in terms of public opinion of the company. Last but not least, Frémin federated a variety of groups—Catholics and Communists, unionists and political circles—thanks to his unusual personal trajectory. Having started out young as a Catholic activist and as a member of the ACO, Frémin had joined the CFTC and then jumped ship to the CGT in 1965.[80] When Citroën fired Frémin, it thus united his heterogeneous allies and thrust the problem of corporate repression into the public spotlight. Four thousand protesters marched through Rennes on January 5, 1967 to protest his layoff.[81] A scandalized press—including the region's leading newspaper, *Ouest-France*—turned against Bercot. And Quai de Javel prepared to fight charges of wrongdoing in court. Passions were so hot that Henri Fréville launched a "cri d'alarme" in the municipal council to restore "à notre Cité un visage serein."[82]

Protagonists on all sides presented the Frémin affair as a broader battle over labor relations in Brittany. For union leaders and Catholic activists, it was a last test of public authorities' willingness to defend workers' rights. If the state and the mayor did not condemn Citroën and force it to rehire Frémin, other local employers would surely imitate the automaker's repressive practices. On the other side of the dispute, Bercot and Ille-et-Vilaine's manufacturers lobby (the *Fédération interprofessionnelle des industries et activités assimilées d'Ille-et-Vilaine*) warned that a conviction of Citroën would open the floodgates to labor unrest and blemish their town's reputation among French industry. The Breton capital might even become a new Saint-Nazaire—Rennes' sister city on the Atlantic coast, whose strong shipbuilders unions had become a foil for outside investors.[83]

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[80] There he became Secretary General for the Citroën-Rennes local and a member of the national metallurgy federation's Executive Committee. Alain Prigent and Jacques Thouroude, "Yannick Frémin," in *Le Maitron. Dictionnaire biographique: Mouvement ouvrier, mouvement social, de 1940 à mai 1968. Volume 5* (Ivry-sur-Seine: Éditions de l'Atelier, 2009).

[81] Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," 6.

[82] Minutes of the Conseil Municipal de Rennes, séances of 29 December 1966 and 30 January 1967. The latter is cited in Henri Fréville, *Un acte de foi: Trente ans au service de la Cité* (Rennes: Éditions Sepes, 1977), 673..

[83] Bercot is cited in Ibid., 677. Jean Prost to Gouyon, ADIV 52J/105. The CELIB's 1962 survey of recently decentralized manufacturers showed that, in effect, Rennes' "situation sociale calme est très appréciée des industriels et on peut citer des cas où l'Ille-et-Vilaine a bénéficié d'implantations au

Both sides focused on Henri Fréville. The mayor had little direct power over Citroën, but he became a bellwether of moral authority, in part because he embodied the conflicting forces in the Rennes community. Fréville was an aggressively progrowth mayor, but he nonetheless upheld a progressive Christian political tradition and maintained ties with the CFTC/CFDT.[84] In the end, Fréville refused to intervene. He claimed that French law required a mayor to be a neutral administrator of public goods. Behind closed doors, however, he confided to a CFDT activist that he was concerned with not compromising future industrial investments.[85] First and foremost among the investors Fréville sought to please was Citroën itself. The automaker had not yet begun to build the second half of the La Janais factory; the future location of its Paris plants, which would soon be kicked out of the capital, also hung in the balance. Brittany's regional development commission, or CODER, similarly refused to take sides. It too was focused on fostering growth, and Pierre Bercot was one of its government-appointed members.[86]

That left the national government. It might seem that a national authority had more leeway to punish Citroën—unlike Rennes elites, it did not need to uphold a local business image—but in fact ministries in Paris faced an analogous dilemma as local officials. They felt Citroën should be rewarded for cooperating with the government's decentralization policy, and hoped to stay in its good graces so that it would continue to send factory jobs to the provinces. The regional prefect's cozy relationship with company executives only reinforced this bias.

In the end, the prefect proposed a compromise amenable to Pierre Bercot. The management agent who had hit Yannick Frémin would be transferred out of the region; in return, the company did not have to reinstate Frémin himself. This back-door deal had only one snag: Citroën still had a court trial to face. The company pleaded with the

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préjudice de Nantes [near Saint-Nazaire], où le climat social a effrayé les candidats à la décentralisation." "Rapport de M. Stievenart sur les problèmes de la décentralisation industrielle en Bretagne," January 1962, 6, CAEF B/16350.

[84] Patrick Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local: Une comparaison franco-britannique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993), 201-203.

[85] Minutes of the Bureau, Union départementale CFDT d'Ille-et-Vilaine, 13 February 1967, ADIV 111J/148.

[86] Union départementale CGT d'Ille-et-Vilaine to Bercot, reproduced in the Renseignements généraux note of 31 January 1967, ADIV 511W/164.

prefect to get the case dismissed, warning, "Si nous perdons ce procès, l'ébranlement moral et social dans la Région sera grave." Citroën warned that if Frémin won, Brittany could expect everything from a contagion of worker radicalism to embarrassing court battles: the company's lawyers were ready to open libel suits against Breton newspapers and politicians who had taken sides in the affair.[87] In the end, the government could not stop the trial, but it did its best to douse the prosecution. A Labor Inspection report that condemned Citroën in the affair was mysteriously suppressed. The Inspector at the origin of the report, M. Garandel, was transferred to the department of Cher, over two hundred miles away. The satirical newspaper *Le Canard enchaîné* denounced these machinations. "Où sommes-nous?" it asked. "En Espagne, sous Franco?"[88]

An industrial model based on defending corporate interests and maintaining Brittany's "good business climate" for outside investors had won out over the promotion of labor rights and the ideal of development in "dignity." The goal of moving beyond exploitable labor as the region's main calling card had emerged early; the reform proposals included in the CELIB's 1962 plan were being negotiated even as La Janais opened its doors. And well before 1968, Citroën had clearly posed the dilemmas of branch-plant decentralization in the Rennes community. The Fréville affair in particular forced a response from the mayor, the prefect, the press, and Church and business leaders. Once again, Michel Phlipponneau best expressed the extent of this turnaround in public opinion. In 1967, he wrote that the Citroën factories he had worked so hard to install a decade earlier had become the symbol of Brittany's "colonization" by outside corporations.[89]

Anti-contestation: May 1968 and its Aftermath

The elimination of opposition to Citroën-Rennes came on the eve of a historic upturn in contestation among provincial workers. In effect, May 1968 and the following half-decade called into question the assumption that the residents of weakly industrialized provinces were a docile labor force waiting to be exploited. The intense "worker

[87] Citroën to Préfet de région, 30 November 1967, ADIV 511W/164.
[88] "Une grande enquête du Canard en Bretagne," *Canard Enchaîné*, 15 November 1967.
[89] Phlipponneau, *La Gauche et les régions*.

insubordination" of this period spanned the national territory.[90] In fact, the extent of strikes in decentralized factories led some observers to hypothesize that far from breaking the French labor movement, industrial decentralization had spread and radicalized it. The rising generation of provincial workers had the potential to become a new avant-garde of labor militancy.[91]

Such arguments pointed to both the structural and the spatial particularities of new branch plants. In general, 1968 and its aftermath marked a changing of the guard in the French labor movement, from more skilled and organized workers to younger unskilled workers laboring on Taylorized assembly lines. Provincial branch plants epitomized the new generation. They often contained a crushing majority of unskilled jobs. Their workers were thus confronted with the worst working conditions and career horizons that French industry had to offer.

Alongside the particular structure of new branch plants, there was also a properly spatial aspect to provincial contestation. If many provincial workers were initially happy to have a job close to home, they soon realized that they were paid less than peers in Paris and other industrialized regions. The distance and anonymity of Parisian headquarters exacerbated the sense of "us versus them" that fueled workers' anger. Some labor leaders came around to a properly regionalist view of things. They hoped that the social movements could be "territorialized," as different groups—such as workers and peasants—could be united by their collective domination by Paris and outside capital. Finally, areas of new industrialization often had few union leaders. If that could be a handicap, the more radical elements on the Left also saw it as an opportunity. Without the traditional union bureaucracy—and especially the CGT—to channel anger into classic wage demands, the "new working class" might finally contest the factory regime itself.

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[90] Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 15, 95. For a list of emblematic struggles in decentralized factories, see Nicole Eizner and Bernard Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979), 224-225.

[91] For the following paragraphs, I draw on Eizner and Hervieu, *Anciens paysans, nouveaux ouvriers*, especially 5, 8-19, and chapters 8-9; Gérard Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française (XIXème-XXème siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), 235-236; Thierry Baudouin and Michèle Collin, *Le Contournement des forteresses ouvrières* (Paris: Librairie des Méridiens, 1983), 58-59; DATAR, *Décentralisation industrielle et relations de travail*, 4, 57. On the importance of 1968 in organizing the "new working class" at Caen, see Pelata, "L'Industrie fordienne," 386, 407, 410, 421. For Brittany, see Porhel below.

Proponents of this view idealized wildcat strikes (*grèves sauvages*) and violent coups, in which workers rejected "l'esclavage salarial" altogether.

In the end, the patterns of worker contestation did not obey any simple geographic logic. Workers in traditional industrial centers, often undergoing reconversion or deindustrialization, had plenty to strike about. Meanwhile, the precarious job situation, social heterogeneity, and conservatism of areas of new industrialization ensured that many members of "the new working class" shied away from contestation—let alone the wild ambitions set for it by radical militants.[92] Nonetheless, the very hypothesis of a decentralized revolt against French industry showed the extent to which earlier assumptions had been shaken by *les années 1968*.

Brittany was front and center in this shift of discourse and power. Giant protests had begun across the region on May 8—that is to say, before the events in Paris that rapidly eclipsed the Breton movement. During two weeks, it seemed that the entire region was in the streets. Under the slogan of "l'Ouest veut vivre," protestors demanded more jobs, better salaries, and union rights.[93] Fearing that, "la Bretagne est au bord de la révolte," Georges Pompidou opened unprecedented negotiations with the CELIB, finally conceding the regional development program the coalition had long demanded. That calmed Brittany down, allowing the CRS to repatriate its policemen from the region back to Paris, where they were sorely needed.[94]

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[92] Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française*, 235-236. On the different trends within the French automobile industry, see Nicolas Hatzfeld, "Les ouvriers de l'automobile. Des vitrines sociales à la condition des OS, le changement des regards," in *Les années 68: Le temps de la contestation*, ed. Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, et al. (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2000), 353. For an excellent analysis of the heterogeneity among factories and their workers in Brittany, see Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*. For other analyses of the fact that decentralization projects tarageting "green" workforces can have divergent outcomes, even when their basic elements are very similar, see Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 82-90; Michael Dunford, *Capital, the State, and Regional Development* (London: Pion, 1988), 200-207; Cowie, *Capital Moves*, chapters 2 and 3.

[93] Jacqueline Sainclivier, *La Bretagne de 1939 à nos jours* (Rennes: Editions Ouest-France, 1989), 432-433; Christian Bougeard, "Le 8 mai 1968: 'L'Ouest veut vivre'," in *L'Ouest dans les années 1968*, ed. Vincent Porhel, Jacqueline Sainclivier, and Christian Bougeard (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, forthcoming).

[94] I take up this event in the following chapter. The Pompidou quote is recounted by the former head of the DATAR, François Essig, *DATAR: Des régions et des hommes* (Montréal: Stanké, 1979), 85.. See also Florent Le Bot and Fabrice Marzin, "Le Mai 1968 breton et ses acteurs face à une révolution pompidolienne en matière d'économie des territoires," in *1968, entre libération et libéralisation: La grande bifurcation*, ed. Danielle Tartakowsky and Michel Margairaz (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 237-238; George Pierret, *Mai breton* (Paris: Euregio, 1978), 12-13.

Breton workers took over a number of the region's new factories in a series of emblematic strikes. Labor leaders demanded not only pay hikes, but also true social dialogue and power over production. They also sought to end the region's reputation for conservatism and fatalism. As historian Vincent Porhel writes, these actions revealed "les capacités de la région à remettre en cause une industrialisation au rabais."[95] The prolonged strike at the Joint français factory in Saint-Brieuc brought this movement to its zenith. Its vivid images gave the media a veritable metonym for the revolt of provincial workers against their Parisian headquarters.

The Joint strike also consolidated the fracture within the CELIB that had been revealed by Phlipponneau's departure and worsened in the following years. Many of the regional coalition's members supported the workers' demands. Business interests and their political allies, on the other hand, feared the strike's impact on their ability to attract outside investors. The CELIB maintained a cautious silence during the Joint strike, but its president, René Pleven, publicly criticized the strikers for scaring off investors. Unionists and Left politicians finally left the regional coalition in 1972. The CELIB's leaders tried to make amends by supporting other strikes in the region, but the strategy backfired, provoking the anger of business groups without luring back the Left. By September, the CELIB had effectively unraveled. The contradiction between attracting outside investments and empowering workers had helped sink Brittany's postwar coalition—a unique attempt to put regional development above politics and particular interests.[96] As the CELIB's Secretary General, Georges Pierret, put it, "Vingt deux ans d'union sacrée avaient pris fin en Bretagne."[97]

Citroën-Rennes had precociously raised the dilemmas of branch-plant industrialization, but as national and regional challenges to decentralized industry gained

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[95] Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 9-10, 157, 167, 275; Pierre Flatrès, *La Bretagne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1986), 102, 105-106; Sainclivier, *La Bretagne*, 369.

[96] Pleven and other pro-business elites were forced to backtrack on the Joint français case, under the pressure of public opinion; they condemned the company, if not branch-plant industrialization. Pierret, *Mai breton*, 93-95, 98, 102; Phlipponneau, *Au Joint français*, 12-13; Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 153-159, 161, 167. Of the Joint français affair, the CELIB's Secretary General, Georges Pierret, explains, "le CELIB n'était jamais intervenu au préalable dans ce genre de conflits. La raison principale pour laquelle il s'abstint d'ailleurs était qu'il tentait, au même moment, d'obtenir une nouvelle relance de la décentralisation industrielle. Et il savait à quel point les industriels parisiens cherchaient tous les prétextes pour rester à Paris...Pour autant, il n'était pas question de désavouer la grève. Le CELIB se tut." (Pierret 94). Other issues fractured the CELIB, notably its ability to fight the government for regional investments.

[97] Pierret, *Mai breton*, 98.

steam it largely fell to the wayside. If anything, May 1968 and its aftermath reinforced the authoritarian regime in the Brittany's biggest factory. Management stomped out the remaining embers of unionism smoldering in its Rennes plants and led the counterattack on labor gains in the region. By the beginning of 1968, unionization efforts at Citroën-Rennes had reached a standstill. In May, about a hundred workers tried to launch a strike, but they quickly failed and were chased out of the factory. The main action was in Citroën's Paris region plants, which were occupied by workers on May 20. This long strike was a historic moment for Quai de Javel, but in Rennes it gave management an excuse to close and barricade the car factories.[98] Relegated to their rural homes, Citroën's workers largely abstained from the ongoing protests in Rennes.

On the other hand, May 1968 resuscitated the idea that La Janais could be a battleground for the broader community. Rennes' union locals immediately called for a renewed effort to take over the car factories. On May 14, the CFDT told the CGT that together they could, "faire reculer Citroën comme nous avons fait reculer le pouvoir."[99] However, infighting between the two unions delayed the establishment of a "comité de soutien" until 1969.[100] Management proved more efficient. Philippe de Calan hunkered down to defend La Janais against a potential armed attack by outside radicals. He then positioned himself as a leader in the regional fight against worker contestation. De Calan told the prefect, "Qu'il compte...sur notre exemple et notre action pour le maintien au travail des entreprises locales, dans toute la mesure du possible, ce qui lui permettra de consacrer ses efforts à l'Université et aux Services Publics."[101] Those were not empty words. Management agents organized "commandos" to harass strikers in other Rennes companies and administrations. Some of them even set up a regional branch of the

[98] Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," 7-8; Evelyne Delion, "Le Syndicalisme C.G.T. dans les usines Citroën de Rennes de 1962 à 1981" (masters thesis, Université de Rennes 2, 1998), 22-23.
[99] Marvin, Bureau de l'Union départementale CFDT Ille-et-Vilaine to Secrétaire Général de l'Union départementale CGT, 14 May 1968, ADIV 111J/156.
[100] A *Comité de défense des libertés syndicales chez Citroën Rennes* only got off the ground in January 1969—and then the CFDT refused to participate in its first demonstration. Frémin to CFDT FGM, 19 March 1969, ADIV 111J/156; Delion, "Le Syndicalisme C.G.T. dans les usines Citroën de Rennes," 43.
[101] Philippe de Calan, unpublished memoirs; Cussonneau, "Citroën Rennes et le mouvement de mai 1968," 7-8.

Service d'Action Civique (SAC), a pro-Gaullist association that doubled as an armed militia to fight radicalism.[102]

The biggest change that 1968 brought to the Rennes auto plants was the creation of an "independent" or house union. The new Syndicat indépendant des salariés de Citroën (SISC) adhered to the Confédération française du travail (CFT), the main umbrella organization for "yellow" unionism in France. The CFT's enemies were Communism and the mainstream labor movement; it accused both of sacrificing workers' job security to unreasonable wage demands and to political issues that had no place in the factory. Citroën drew heavily on the precedent of its equally authoritarian competitor, SIMCA, when setting up the SISC. SIMCA had imported the house-union model from the United States in 1947 and demonstrated its efficiency in the following years.[103] In June 1968, it even dispatched a director to help implant the CFT at Citroën. Together, the two automakers constituted the Hexagon's main bastions of house unionism, which otherwise remained a minor force in French labor relations.

The independent union was anything but independent. In 1969, the Labor Inspector described it as "pratiquement une transposition de la hiérarchie de l'entreprise."[104] The SISC was directly supported by the factory's direction. Management agents staffed the organization and ensured that workers voted for it during elections; the house union's card was the indispensable sesame for promotions and paternalist advantages. As a result, the SISC immediately became the factory's only viable labor organization. It swept the July 1968 elections for workers' representatives

[102] According to the prefect's intelligence services, Citroën agents remained "l'ossature" of the SAC's regional branch until the mid-1970s. Renseignements généraux note, 21 August 1981, ADIV 511W/166; Ibid., 8.

[103] In fact, its site was the other auto assembly plant in France, alongside Citroën-Rennes, that did not strike in 1968. Similar forces were at play in both factories: an authoritarian hierarchy, well-funded patronage, and a vulnerable labor force—foreign immigrants in the case of SIMCA, former peasants at Citroën-Rennes. Hatzfeld, "Les Ouvriers de l'automobile," 356. The best analysis of the concrete operation of "independent" unionism is Jean-Louis Loubet and Nicolas Hatzfeld, *Les Sept vies de Poissy* (Boulogne: ETAI, 2001), 111-123. On the national organization and ideology of independent unionism, see Didier Favre, *Ni rouges ni jaunes: De la CGSI à la CSL, l'expérience du syndicalisme indépendant* (Paris: Éditions Midi moins le Quart, 1998), 5-14, 67-82 et 279-282; Jean-Louis Loubet, *Histoire de l'automobile française* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 354-356.

[104] Inspecteur du Travail to Directeur départemental du travail, 3 October 1969, 1488W/122.

with the exception of a single CGT member, who carried on as the sole voice of opposition in the factories.[105]

In many ways, the SISC simply rationalized the existing "Citroën system." It allowed management to outmaneuver France's increasingly stringent labor laws and the spirit of social dialogue announced in the national accords of 1968. It provided a permanent structure for the "independent" candidates organized to win workplace elections after 1965. The SISC also approved a factory accord drawn up by management after May 1968; the CGT and CFDT had refused the accord, which undercut the deal Citroën had cut with its Paris plants and expressly condemned worker contestation.[106] All in all, Rennes' Labor Inspector concluded that the house union had become a costly, but valuable tool in Citroën's repertoire of labor control: it lent a veneer of legitimacy to the company's claim that dialogue was taking place. In that sense, the Inspector concluded, 1968 had profited management more than workers at Citroën-Rennes.[107]

The CFDT withdrew its resources from the auto factories, entirely throwing in the towel in the early 1970s; the CGT stubbornly maintained a single workers' representative. Those who continued to voice opposition to Citroën's management therefore did so outside the workplace, through a political engagement. Yannick Frémin became the CGT's permanent activist in Rennes and entered the Communist Party in May 1968. The Left's candidates for municipal office perennially distributed tracts outside the factory gates.[108] Among them was Edmond Hervé, who was elected mayor of Rennes in 1977, finally ending Henri Fréville's long centrist reign. The remaining CGT

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[105] Renseignements généraux note of 25 July 1968, ADIV 511W/164.

[106] The CGT demanded the "application intégrale du protocole de Paris" in Rennes, and the Labor Inspector seconded this request in the name of maintaining the spirit of the government's national agreement: "Compte tenu de l'impact que la remise en cause de l'application des accords parisiens aux établissements de province pourrait avoir sur le plan national, j'estime infiniment souhaitable [leur application intégrale à Rennes]." Frémin to Citroën Rennes and Directeur départemental du travail, 3 July 1968, and Inspecteur départemental du travail to Citroën Rennes, 5 July 1968, ADIV 1169W/1. On the non-application of the national accords, see Delion, "Le Syndicalisme C.G.T. dans les usines Citroën de Rennes," 25-31.

[107] Inspecteur départemental du travail to Directeur départemental du travail, 3 October 1969, ADIV 1488W/122.

[108] This was not without danger: on March 10, 1971, company officials doused the Socialist politicians—including the future mayor, Edmond Hervé—in oil and drove them off the road. Note in the dossier "Incidents 13 mai [1971]," ADIV 511W/165.

representative at Citroën-Rennes, Joseph Cussonneau, entered the municipal council in the same elections, on the Communist ticket.[109]

Last but not least, Michel Phlipponneau joined the new mayor as his councilor for urban planning. In the run up to the 1977 elections, Phlipponneau published a postwar history of Rennes that doubled as a venomous critique of Henri Fréville's time in office. Twenty-five years of progrowth efforts had made the mayor a comprador lackey of outside capital, Phlipponneau wrote. This was nowhere truer than in the case of Citroën. Fréville had generously subsidized the company's arrival, pushed its workers to the urban periphery, and turned a blind eye as management flaunted employees' basic rights. If Citroën's workers were absent from May 1968, its factories remained front and center in public debates as the Left proclaimed the need to overturn the city's postwar development model.[110]

The Silence of "Citroën's Peasants"

The late 1960s reinvigorated the figure of the docile Citroën worker. The SISC claimed that "les travailleurs de chez Citroën Rennes, de souche rurale," shared its conservative platform: rejecting class warfare, unreasonable wage demands, and political engagements in order to focus on job stability and the gradual improvement of their situation. Or to put it in language that former peasants could relate to, Citroën's workers "sav[aient] encore que l'on ne coupe pas le blé au printemps et qu'une poule ne peut pondre qu'un oeuf à la fois."[111]

The CGT and the CFDT claimed the opposite. The 1965 elections had revealed workers' desire for genuine union representation, which only a vicious campaign of repression had silenced. Privately, however, many union activists held ideas a position

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[109] On Cussonneau, see Marivin to various, 5 July 1977, and Caradec, Union régionale CFDT to national FGM, 8 july 77, ADIV 111J/156.

[110] Solène Gaudin writes, "Les difficultés à faire aboutir des propositions qu'il considère comme nécessaires pour le développement de la Bretagne vont l'amener à franchir le Rubicon en s'engageant politiquement. Candidat aux élections législatives de 1967, 1968 et 1973, élu conseiller général de Rennes de 1973 à 1985, conseiller régional de 1977 à 1986, il devient premier adjoint au maire de Rennes chargé de l'urbanisme et président du Conseil du district de Rennes de 1977 à 1989." Solène Gaudin, "De l'action du géographe au géographe acteur, réflexions autour du parcours d'un géographe pragmatique: Michel Phlipponneau," (eegeosociale.free.fr/IMG/pdf/GaudinActeurs.pdf) 2006, 1. See also Le Bot and Marzin, "Le mai 1968 breton," 257-258. Hervé's Left municipal team initially wanted to trim back Fréville's model of local boosterism, which they saw as being submitted to capitalism, but quickly returned to a formula that resembled the Fréville years. Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, 203-209.

[111] SISC, "Réflexions après un scrutin," undated, ADIV 511W/164.

closer to that of the SISC: rural workers were indeed mired in a culture of docility. They had no class consciousness or interest in politics, were more concerned with their individual advancement than with collective action, and even seemed satisfied with the conditions Citroën offered them.[112] CGT leaders claimed that the CFTC/CFDT's reformist positions only reinforced such "traditionalism" and acceptance of "class collaboration," but the Christian unionists shared the Marxists' frustration. One of their organizers complained that the CFDT's message made little headway among rural workers who were "sous-développés [et sans] réflexe de classe," and who by nature "réagissent contre ce qui vient de l'extérieur."[113] As union efforts were perennially frustrated, the idea that former peasants simply were not made to speak up became as commonly admitted as the fact that Citroën employed an authoritarian hierarchy to silence them.

Part of the problem was the social distance between organizers and the rank-and-file. In 1963, the Communist Party had written that unionizing rural Brittany would require bridging gaps—between "gens de la ville et de la campagne," between Catholics and Communists, between peasant-workers with two revenues and those who lived solely off of wage labor.[114] A decade later, however, these divisions seemed as great as ever.[115] On the whole, union sympathizers were more urban and more skilled, they ate at different tables, and even the gait of their walk distinguished them from the former peasants on the assembly line.[116] Citroën's rural recruitment had accomplished what it was intended to do: divide the working class, preventing the transmission of union traditions to new categories of laborers.[117]

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[112] A PCF activist complained that peasant-workers were "par leur nature traditionalistes (collabo [ration] de classes)." Others observed that part of Citroën's personnel was "plus ou moins satisfait de son état actuel," and it was hard to convince them that "Citroën n'a pas été un élément de progression." Fédération départementale du PCF, minutes of 14 October 1966 and 26 June 1967, Joseph Cussonneau private archives.

[113] Bourges in séance of 25 May 1970, ADIV 111J/148.

[114] *Unité ouvrière,* April and November 1963, Joseph Cussonneau private archives.

[115] In 1971, the PCF still declared the need to "surmonter les préjugés qui trop souvent encore, séparent chez Citroën les travailleurs entre eux: ceux qui sont essentiellement ouvriers et ceux qui partagent leur activité entre le travail à l'usine et l'exploitation d'une petite ferme, les travailleurs catholiques et ceux qui ne le sont pas." Press conference of PCF departmental federation, 22 October 1971, Joseph Cussonneau private archives.

[116] Personal interviews with Joseph Cussonneau, 24-28 November 2009, and with Daniel Pelé, 5 July 2009.

[117] More broadly, the social distance between rural, unskilled workers and more urban, skilled workers was one of the principle divisions in postwar French labor (alongside the gender divide and the distance

Unionists' approach to the rank-and-file was not without condescension. "Nous venons t'éclairer," a CFTC tract proclaimed in 1963, announcing the missionary zeal with which activists set out to transform rural mentalities.[118] In effect, whether Catholic or Marxist, organizers considered that their militant training provided the analytic key necessary for decoding power relations. Unions' discourse of uplift was also a discourse of responsibility. One CFTC tract told workers:

> Vous devez impérativement prendre vos responsabilités, vous battre...en deux mots vous comporter en *hommes.* Être indifférent ou laisser faire les autres est assurément plus aisé mais c'est une méthode *lâche* qui dénote un *manque complet de personnalité...* Tout ceci s'adresse d'ailleurs tant aux femmes qu'aux hommes, si elles ont le droit de vote, elles ont aussi le devoir de se syndiquer. [Italics in the original][119]

Such berating sometimes depended on dismissing workers' fears of layoffs and other punishments. An internal CFTC note complained of "l'éternelle réponse alibi [des ouvriers non-syndiqués]: 'c'est la porte qui me guette, je me retrouverai à la rue sans travail, comment nourrirai-je ma famille etc...' Vous savez que cet argument est bien faible."[120] Other activists portrayed unskilled workers as automatons—hopelessly stultified by fear and the monotony of Taylorized labor. An ACO activist thus reported that female workers "restent avec leur esprit de jalousie et des têtes de bêtes traquées pendant la durée de leur travail...Si on leur dit la moindre chose, pour essayer de les faire réfléchir, elles s'emportent."[121]

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between native Frenchmen and immigrants). It was commonly consecrated in the condescending nicknames that skilled workers gave to former peasants, such as "bumpkin" (*bouseux*) or "beet picker" (*betteravier*). Noiriel, *Les Ouvriers dans la société française*, 228-232, 235. At the Renault factory in Cléon, in Upper Normandy—the first plant of the company to walk out in May 1968—striking workers even brandished the title of "beet picker" on their signs, to vent their anger against a largely Parisian hierarchy. Alain P. Michel, ed., *Renault Cléon: 50 ans de fabrications mécaniques* (Boulogne-Billancourt: ETAI, 2008), 64.

[118] 12 December 1963, ADIV 111J/289.

[119] CFTC Métaux to the Citroën union section, 15 July 1964, ADIV 111J/339.

[120] CFTC Métaux local to Section Citroën, 15 July 1964, ADIV 111J/339. Amazingly, union leaders promised potential candidates for the 1965 elections that running would not hurt their career, since elected representatives were legally protected against management harassment. The rapid resignation of the new recruits when Citroën deployed its repressive apparatus was in direct proportion to such false promises and the arm-twisting of reluctant warriors. CFDT to potential candidates for *conseil d'entreprise*, 5 May 1966, ADIV 111J/339.

[121] "Une militante ACO nous dit..." ca. 1960, dossier "Faits vécus," ACO archives, Favrais papers.

This denunciation of workers' ignorance and minimization of personal fears played into the hands of the SISC. [122] "Vous considérez que la masse laborieuse est bête par nature," the house union told its rivals, "et vous pensez qu'elle est tout juste apte à suivre aveuglément les consignes données par vos intellectuels aux idées fumeuses."[123] Such criticism did not seem to faze CFDT and CGT leaders, who continued to believe in the righteousness of their cause. But the house union's crushing success did lead them to wonder if there was not an inherent, insurmountable gap between the conservatism of rural workers and the progressive goals of the French labor movement.

Recent testimonies reveal the extent to which the 1960s and 1970s consolidated the notion that "Citroën's peasants" were inherently docile. A lifelong unionist in the factory told Hubert Budor, for his 2001 documentary *Les Paysans de Citroën*,

> Au début, la main était déjà mise sur ces gens-là. Comme ils avaient leurs petites fermes...'Nous on a notre petit truc. On est pas si mal que ça ! Citroën a fait du bien à la région.'...Ces sont des gens qui vivent sur leurs fermes...C'est pas eux qui vont revendiquer quoique ce soit. Au contraire...ils se contentaient. Ils avaient une paye le matin, l'autre paye qui arrivait l'après-midi [grâce à la double activité]. Et ils vivaient sur la ferme. C'était magnifique.

At times, this CGT leader comes remarkably close to management discourse. He suggests that Breton peasants were happy with the fate Citroën reserved for them, and even that they were right to be grateful for it:

> C'est vrai que ces petits cultivateurs. Qu'est-ce qu'ils auraient fait ?..Ils auraient travaillé leur petite ferme. Ils auraient été encore en corvées chez un autre plus grand...Citroën, pour eux, c'était quelque chose qui était bien. C'est vrai que ça a désenclavé toute cette région. Y'avait quand même pas de travail. Y'avait rien.[124]

Pierre Bercot himself could not have better expressed the idea that Citroën was Brittany's savoir. If the company took advantage of rural Bretons' desperation, this argument goes, the latter were happy to accept hard labor, tough authority, and moderate salaries to get a job close to home.

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[122] An anti-democratic tinge marked one article in the bulletin "Informations correspondances ouvrières." Taking workers' pulse following the Frémin incident, it cited one worker complaining that for "les ouvriers ici...c'est l'ignorance complète du social…Cela me fait toujours rire de voir tout ce monde voter sans avoir le strict minimum de formation politique, ce qui est absurde et ce qui prouve la fausseté du suffrage universel." Reprinted in *Liaisons sociales*, undated, ADIV 111J/339.
[123] SISC, "Lettre ouverte à la CGT," undated, ADIV 511W/164.
[124] Interview for Hubert Budor, *Les Paysans de Citroën* (France, 2001).

The union activist interviewed by Budor has a deep-seated anger toward the rural Bretons he had tried to help. He sacrificed his time and career to maintain an opposition voice in the decentralized factory. In return,

> Les gens qu'il y avait à Citroën, il se fich[ai]ent totalement de notre figure...Ils n'ont pas accepté la lutte des classes. Quand il y a eu les grèves de 68, vous les avez pas vu. Si ! Vous savez où ils étaient ? A la CSL [ex-CFT]. Ils montaient la garde à l'intérieur de l'usine.

When Hubert Budor suggests that perhaps not all these workers wholeheartedly supported the house union, but rather were forced to accept it, the CGT leader rejects his interpretation outright:

> Ils n'ont pas accepté ? Eh bien, s'ils ne l'ont pas accepté ils l'ont supporté parce qu'ils n'ont rien dit...Quand les Fessard, les Rippert [management's most notorious agents], toute cette équipe-là [passaient, on disait,] 'Ah, mais on est avec vous monsieur.' 'On va quand même pas faire partie de la bande de cocos, là.'

In sum, for this union leader, rural poverty and company authoritarianism helped explain workers' submission, but they did not excuse it.

What is most striking about the battle for Citroën-Rennes is how hard it is to find traces of rank-and-file voices. Even when labor activists held meetings in rural villages or approached colleagues in the factories, they often exchanged little with them. Most workers were literally silenced by a fear of company spies—"muets et terrorisés," in the words of an ACO investigator.[125] Even among friends, the question of unions and company authority was often a taboo subject. As a result, management, labor leaders, and the press controlled representations of Citroën's silent majority.[126]

One of Budor's interviews gives a voice to the complexity of opinions and strategies that must have lurked beneath the surface appearance of workers' indifference. Henri Baril refused to join the SISC. Like many other skilled workers, Baril's resistance of management authoritarianism was driven by his sense that he was more enlightened about labor relations, and more invested in preserving his personal autonomy, than the

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[125] Anonymous, exchange with Joseph Richard, October 1966 to January 1967, ADIV 111J/339.

[126] Many of the union activists who drove around rural towns to get out the vote in 1965 were in a world of poverty that was unknown to them. They learned little more from their meetings, since most of the workers who turned out were literally silenced by a fear of company spies. They politely listened and then returned home. Personal interview with Daniel Pelé, 5 July 2009. Citroën workers' silence was a common trope at the time. See Alain Picart, "Une Implantation industrielle récente en milieu rural, Citroën-Rennes: Une politique de dilution spatiale de la main-d'œuvre" (Masters thesis, Université de Paris I, 1975).

rural rank-and-file. These were "de nouveaux ouvriers qui ne connaissaient rien, pas grand chose à leurs droits," he told Budor. "C'était une main-d'œuvre docile."

Rejecting the house union came at a price in lost pay and promotions, however. Henri understandably carries a simmering anger about this, even in retirement. After affirming several times that he has no regrets about standing up for his rights, Baril finally recognizes, "J'ai eu des rancoeurs...parce que j'estime, après coup, qu'ils m'ont exploité au maximum." In one of the most poignant moments of Budor's film, Henri Baril therefore hesitates between two narratives. In one, he took the enlightened path compared to Citroën's docile peasants. In the other, he was the exploited worker, whereas those who played by company rules finished further up the corporate ladder.

Part of the ambiguity of Baril's situation comes from the fact that, however costly it was, his resistance was silent and passive. Aside from a brief flirt with the CGT in 1968, he never joined an opposition union. In fact, on the surface of things Baril has much of the profile of the docile worker he criticizes. He stayed with Citroën his entire career, tied as he was to the Rennes region and his rural home there. His own wife, Eliane, herself joined the house union as a practical matter of getting on in the factory; so did a number of their siblings who also worked for Citroën. Indeed, Henri himself even took the SISC card briefly, in order to get one of his brothers hired. And finally, the Barils did not talk about the union question in public. "Dans chaque car, y'a un mouchard," Eliane explains to Budor. In short, Henri Baril has a strong sense of having resisted Citroën's authoritarian model, and he has the lost pay to prove it, but how could a fellow worker—or a historian—tell him apart from the silent majority? It is only thanks to Budor's interview that we get a sense of the Barils' shifting aspirations and strategies, as well as Henri's poignant sense of injustice, cloaked beneath a surface appearance of social calm.

Unfortunately, the interview also shows that the myth of the docile worker has a strong hold even on those who suffered from it. Although his wife joined the house union to get on in the factory and his own career was stunted by a refusal to do so, Henri Baril retains his conceit that the rural rank-and-file went along with Citroën's model because it was unenlightened, "une main-d'œuvre docile." Baril is simply reiterating an assumption shared by most participants in Citroën's history, across ideological and social

divides. If he can make such a sweeping assessment of his fellow workers, it is surely because, like his own family's history, their own opinions and challenges remain largely wrapped in silence.

Conclusion

The 1965 elections suggest that other workers were closer to Henri Baril than he imagines. Just when management seemed most confident that its peasant workforce was immune to the sirens of collective action, the CFDT and the CGT won historic scores. Citroën doused this nascent unionization, but only at the price of a repressive campaign that solidified its image as one of France's most authoritarian manufacturers. May 1968 and its aftermath thus presented Quai de Javel with a mixed record. On the one hand, the calm in its Rennes factories confirmed that the company had successfully transplanted its union-free model to Breton soil. That was no mean feat. Neither the "Citroën system" nor decentralization to rural France guaranteed social calm, as the strikes in Citroën-Paris and provincial branch plants showed. On the other hand, the public image of Citroën's "pioneering" decentralization was irreparably tarnished.

This turn of events had a broader implication for Brittany's postwar development model. When the CELIB launched its campaign to industrialize the region in the 1950s, its leaders broadly accepted the advertisement of cheap and docile labor as a necessary evil—their main tool for launching industrialization in France's rural periphery. Within a decade, however, figures ranging from unions to Catholic reformers and the regional press were challenging this approach. Citroën was one of their first targets. Initially welcomed as the region's savior, the automaker came to symbolize for many in the Rennes community a political choice, which became increasingly pressing during the 1960s: should they continue to prioritize the region's "good business climate" in the name of job creation or defend workers' aspirations to improve the disappointing social conditions in new decentralized factories?

"Citroën's peasants" largely abstained from this debate. Whether it represented fear or indifference, their silence made them an emblem of the provincial docility that underpinned manufacturers' interest for decentralization. As for Citroën officials, they proclaimed their program in no uncertain terms: to preserve the authoritarian work regime they had pioneered in Paris and the conservative social order of rural Brittany

against the countervailing forces of industrialization, labor organization, and state oversight. In this version, the tradeoff exacted for creating jobs in poor provincial regions was the corporation's right to escape the progressive labor gains and Fordist social compromise that many postwar workers had come to take for granted.

CONCLUSION

Les années 1968

Jérôme Monod, the head of the DATAR (Délégation à l'Aménagement du territoire et à l'Action régionale), called 1968 a "revelation." He was not talking about the social uprising that had begun in May or about Charles de Gaulle's decision to make regionalization a political reform, which helped remove the president from power the following year. Rather, Monod was talking about the national census. The 1968 census showed that century-old geographic trends had been reversed, challenging the core assumptions underpinning *aménagement du territoire*. The biggest surprise was that the Paris region's migratory balance with the provinces had been equalized. Regional capitals were also growing slower than expected, trumping government plans for concentrating development in major metropolitan areas. The fastest population growth was now in small and medium towns, and by 1975 rural areas outpaced cities for the first time in a century. In short, France's urban hierarchy was flattening out, finally realizing century-old ideals of decentralized living.[1]

The 1968 census also revealed major shifts in regional fortunes. The venerable framework of "two Frances" was increasingly scrambled. The southwest now beat national development rates. For the first time in a century its population had increased; even Brittany's out-migration had been cut by two-thirds. The Hexagon's underdeveloped half also captured an ever larger part of the nation's new manufacturing jobs—just 22 percent between 1954 and 1962, but 53 percent between 1962 and 1968—and once-sleepy cities like Rennes, Toulouse, and Montpellier revamped their image as leaders of high-tech growth and quality of life. The southeast of the Hexagon, already privileged in earlier periods, was capturing even more growth in a Sunbelt-style dynamic. France's northeast industrial heartland, by contrast, was clearly in decline. Already in

[1] Joseph Lajugie, Claude Lacour, and Pierre Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Dalloz, 1985), 439-472.

1966, the government launched a major industrial reconversion effort in the area, but the speed with which the venerable motors of the French economy were contracting surprised all parties. Between 1954 and 1975, Lorraine and Nord-Pas-de-Calais shed 12.6 percent of their industrial workforce. Even this retreat, however, could not match the staggering blue-collar job losses in the Paris region.[2] Of course, venerable disparities were not quickly erased. During the Trente Glorieuses taken as a whole, three regions—Ile-de-France, Provence-Côte d'Azur, and Rhône-Alpes—captured half of the nation's demographic increase, while the West's population just barely grew. Similar situations could be found in industrial job rates, production, and revenues.[3] All the same, the changes revealed in 1968 caught politicians and planners off guard, demanding revisions of the regional policy decreed just a dozen years earlier.

The census is representative of a broader point: many of the trends that destabilized regional policy in the 1970s and 1980s had in fact begun in the 1960s—just when many observers thought a coherent *aménagement du territoire* policy was finally getting underway. As such, 1968 offers a symbolic turning point for a number of themes addressed in the previous chapters. In terms of Paris containment, first of all, the net decline of blue-collar jobs in the region renewed debates about the role of government policy in deindustrializing the capital's traditional working-class suburbs. When decentralization measures were passed in 1955, vigorous industrial growth offered hopes for the mutual industrialization of Paris and the provinces. Within a decade, however, declining job creation produced a growing conflict of interests between the defense of the capital's manufacturing base and the reliance on Parisian investments to develop the provinces. Second, the declining rate of industrial decentralization clashed with the provincial demand for more and better jobs, which was voiced so spectacularly during the social movements of 1968. The last years of the Trente Glorieuses left an ambiguous legacy on this score. The tremendous overspill of Parisian industrialization had brought a historically unique wave of investments in northern regions, but most contemporaries

[2] Ibid; Philippe Vasseur, *Les Orientations de la politique d'aménagement du territoire: Étude présentée par la section des économies régionales et de l'aménagement du territoire du Conseil économique et social* (Paris: Journaux officiels, 1979), I.2.H.
[3] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 439-472.

focused on decentralization's limits—in the geography, quantity, and quality of jobs offered.

Planners' main response to the social disappointments of branch-plant industrialization was a third aspect of French regional policy: the unprecedented effort to create dynamic metropolitan economies in the 1960s. These programs met with variable success, not only in their goal of competing with Paris for top-notch investments and establishing new industrial bases, but also in their promise to integrate entire regions into a more progressive development model. Too often, metropolitan programs privileged high-skilled elites, disappointed hopes for blue-collar job growth, and not least antagonized the representatives of surrounding towns—an antagonism that helped make polarized development a short-lived experiment. Fourth and finally, critics of the government's regional policy did not wait for the economic crisis to denounce the notion of territorial redistribution or France's complicated system of national-regional planning. In fact, such criticism emerged as soon as the government adopted a spatial Keynesian stance in 1955 and grew in proportion to equalizing programs. By 1968, President de Gaulle was decided to politicize regionalization; two years later, businessmen and government officials fought to remove regional redistribution from the nation's Sixth Plan. The underlying principle of national planning—that a neutral administration could harmonize aid to peripheral regions and investments in France's economic core—was in duress well before 1974.

1. Paris: from Working-Class Town to Global City

The clearest success of decentralization policy was the retraction of Parisian manufacturing, which freed space for the capital's renovation as a world-class metropolis. Paris' working-class suburbs—the core of French industrialization for much of the twentieth century—still marked seemingly uncontainable growth at the turn of the 1960s. Within a decade, however, their situation changed irreparably. By 1968, the Paris region's blue-collar job base had sloped back down to its 1954 levels. The 1974 crisis dramatically amplified this trend, unleashing a long deindustrialization process from

which most towns in the region's center would never recover.[4] Decentralization policy took much of the public blame for the decline of blue-collar Paris. In reality, the shift of production to the provinces only played a minority and steadily declining role in a broader process of industrial and urban restructuring. On the other hand, its impact was still substantial, and the use of containment policy as a public lightning rod drew attention to one of the earliest and most continuous features of French territorial change: the state's prominent role in promoting deindustrialization processes. In the Hexagon, factory flight could hardly appear as a natural and anonymous economic force.[5]

Parisian workers and politicians had good reason to complain. In a comprehensive study published in 1984, the geographer Jean Bastié estimated that factory transfers subsidized by decentralization policy had generated some 200,000 layoffs in the Paris region.[6] Since the loss of factories was concentrated by time and place, decentralization had a particularly strong impact in some localities. In the suburb of Saint-Denis, one of the earliest and hardest hit by deindustrialization, a full 34 percent of jobs lost between 1958 and 1967 were due to the transfer of factories to the provinces.[7] The magnitude of such losses disproved the myth that decentralization was mostly "decentralized expansion." The state promoted runaway factories, not just overspill growth.[8] On the other hand, the discourse of decentralized expansion highlighted a key reality of Paris deindustrialization: the largest negative impact of *aménagement du*

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[4] Paris proper lost 467,000 non-construction industrial jobs between 1954 and 1962, at which point only 138,000 were left. Jean Bastié, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris: Paris de 1945 à 2000* (Paris: Hachette, 2000), 138, 163, 203.

[5] H. V. Savitch, *Post-Industrial Cities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 113-6; Jean Lojkine, *La Politique urbaine* (Paris: Mouton, 1976), 9.

[6] In 1964, 90,000 jobs represented 7 percent of the region's industrial job base. On the other hand, only 1 percent of Paris manufacturers had done any decentralization at that date. Pierre Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle de la région parisienne: Bilan et aspects (1950-1964)" (doctoral thesis, Université Paris 10, 1969), 22, 186; Jean Bastié, *Géographie du Grand Paris* (Paris: Masson, 1984), 84. For the period between 1961 and 1964, decentralization to the provinces accounted for about 20 percent of all demolished factory space. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 84-87, 137-139; Jean Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," *Notes et études documentaires* (May, 1970): 30-32; Bernard Ferniot, *La Décentralisation industrielle* (Paris: IAURIF, 1976), 84-85, 87, 97.

[7] Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 194-196; Marie-Hélène Bacqué and Sylvie Fol, *Le devenir des banlieues rouges* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1997), 40. For lists of the hardest-hit areas, see Bastié, "Paris, ville industrielle," 27-29. In a number of towns, the majority of job losses through decentralization were due to a single sector, such as the electronics industry in Malakoff or textiles in the second arrondissement of Paris (Trolliet 190).

[8] See chapter 2 and Jean Bastié and Christian Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation industrielle en France (1954-1984)," *Cahiers du CREPIF* 7 (September, 1984): 36-44.

territoire was not in terms of direct layoffs, but rather the subtler process of new expansion in the provinces and cutbacks in Paris. Between 1950 and 1982, Parisian manufacturers created 600,000 decentralized jobs—a total that would have more than compensated job cutbacks if this work had been located in the Paris region.[9]

Government pressure was only part of a manufacturer's decision to shift production, of course, but much state promotion of decentralization was more diffuse than direct negotiations with firms. Beginning with Vichy, central planners recognized that their most important mission was to achieve systemic changes: subsidizing the provinces' attractiveness, making it clear that the government would not allow indefinite investment in Parisian sites, encouraging firms to begin planning for future production transfers, and providing the guidance and contacts they would need to make their move. This broader focus makes it hard to evaluate the real impact of government intervention, but that was precisely the point. Most officials quickly came around to the notion that for their decentralization project to survive both economically and politically, they needed to focus on policies that made transfers a profitable deal for companies, limited overbearing *dirigisme*, and made deindustrialization seem like the natural slope of things, not the result of a deliberate state effort. French planners never abandoned their more public, interventionist, and contentious policies—making the administration's attack on the urban working class more spectacular than in many other countries—but these actions were just the tip of the iceberg.

For Paris and its inner suburbs, the negative impact of decentralization to the provinces was reinforced by the deconcentration of manufacturing within the Paris region, to outlying suburbs, transportation corridors, and rural towns. Here too, state policy played a central role. The Paris Region District (DRP), headed by Paul Delouvrier, opened up new industrial space in these peripheral areas precisely to accelerate the movement of factories out of central neighborhoods. Even short moves often created the same problems as long-range decentralization in muted form. Employers took the opportunity to rationalize production and shed much of their existing workforce. A business study estimated that between 1962 and 1967, 42 percent of

[9] Bastié cited in Jacques Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation de la banlieue parisienne," in *Ouvriers en banlieue, XIXe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jacques Girault (Paris: Editions de l'Atelier, 1998), 104.

workers kept their jobs during factory transfers within the region, as opposed to just 15 percent during decentralization to the provinces. As short-distance moves increasingly outpaced long-range ones, however, deconcentration soon surpassed decentralization in the total number of layoffs. Meanwhile, if the flight of factories to outlying towns kept work within the region, it hit traditional blue-collar neighborhoods and suburbs just as hard.[10]

Nonetheless, it was decentralization policy that took the brunt of criticism for deindustrialization. Parisian politicians and workers' denunciation of planners' programs had begun with the initial transfer of defense production in the 1930s and continued after the war, even when little decentralization was actually taking place. The gradual spread of deindustrialization in the 1960s ensured that tensions remained lively. By 1960, industry was retracting in Paris *intra muros*, even as it continued to grow in the rest of the region. The deterioration of the job situation became apparent in some inner-ring suburbs in the following years, leading to renewed calls to repeal the negative control on factory construction (the *agrément*).[11] In the late 1960s, tensions came to a head. Paris region deindustrialization became a prominent subject in the media. Representatives of Saint-Denis, the suburb hardest hit by job losses, vividly condemned the DATAR for refusing to approve new factory growth; the department's prefect echoed their complaints.[12] Paul Delouvrier, the head of the DRP, proclaimed his refusal to govern the spread of brownfield ruins around Paris, echoing reflections on how to get rid of the *agrément*.[13]

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[10] The business study was undertaken by the metallurgy group in the Paris region branch of the UIMM. Trolliet, "La Décentralisation industrielle," 138-143, 191-193; Ferniot, *La Décentralisation industrielle*, Ferniot, 84-87, 97.

[11] Parisian interests repeatedly campaigned to repeal the *agrément*. The DATAR, however, pushed in the opposite direction, hoping to reinforce it and get it extended to the departments surrounding the Paris region, which capture so much industrial growth. CIAT, minutes of 20 May 1966, CAC 19840649/5.

[12] See the dossier in CAC 19850747/4 and Xavier Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière dans les années 68: Essai d'histoire politique des usines* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 317-318. The earliest intervention in the archives is a statement in the National Assembly by M. Ordu, a *député* of the Seine-Saint-Denis department, dating from February 1968; the prefect got involved by 1971. The 1974 strike at the Rateau factory in La Courneuve gave workers unions, politicians, and the prefect an occasion to join together in denouncing the *agrément*. *Le Monde*, 15 February 1974, CAC 19850747/4.

[13] CNAT, minutes of 11 June and 9 July 1970, CAC 19890575/178.

When the first mayoral elections were held in Paris in 1975, Jacques Chirac campaigned on the slogan of repealing decentralization policy altogether.[14]

The DATAR was headed in the opposite direction. It not only successfully defended the *agrément* against attacks, but also pushed state subsidies for decentralization to new highs in the late 1960s.[15] The divergence between the DATAR and the DRP was simply the most visible expression of a broader regional conflict of interests. Provincial politicians and growth coalitions tirelessly blamed the DRP's overturn of containment for the modest results of industrial decentralization, called upon the DATAR to accelerate the flow of investments out of the capital, and redoubled their own efforts to attract Parisian manufacturers.[16] Institutions that were supposed to take a national view of *aménagement du territoire* but were tilted to provincial interests—such as the CNAT and the Social and Economic Council—refused to recommend the repeal of negative controls.[17]

This regional conflict of interests was neither static nor straightforward. When strong decentralization measures were instituted, in the mid-1950s, the phenomenal growth of Parisian industry made decentralization appear to be a relatively "win-win" proposition. For nearly a decade, Parisian manufacturers created tens of thousands of jobs per year in the provinces—counting for a major proportion of growth in a number of northern regions—without making a dent in the capital's workforce. This was a historically unique phenomenon, however, and it proved short-lived. In 1963, both the Paris region's industrial workforce and the number of decentralization jobs created each year began to decline. In retrospect, that year marked the turn toward a "lose-lose" dynamic: decentralization now created ever fewer jobs in the provinces, even as it

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[14] On Chirac and the broader debate in the Paris region on deindustrialization, see Michel Carmona, *Le Grand Paris: L'évolution de l'idée d'aménagement de la Région parisienne* (Bagneux: Girotypo, 1979), 433-440.

[15] DATAR, "Note relative à la situation budgétaire du régime des primes," 5 November 1969, and following discussion in CIAT dossier, CAEF 2A/16.

[16] As the DATAR told the government, "Le climat actuel de la province est caractérisé par une tension psychologique résultant du sentiment que le Gouvernement souhaiterait développer par priorité la région parisienne et aurait tendance à relâcher l'effort entrepris dans le domaine de l'action régionale," especially in the West. "Note sur certains problèmes d'aménagement du territoire," ca. early 1966, Michel Debré personal archives, CHSP 2DE/35. See also Delouvrier's confrontation with provincial boosters in *Cahiers de l'hexagone* 27 (November 1965), 41-61.

[17] CNAT, minutes of 9 December 1969 and 26 May 1970, CAC 19890575/178, and the undated note "Politique industrielle et aménagement du territoire," CAC 19890575/45.

contributed to the industrial decline in the center of the Paris region.[18] This lose-lose dynamic would reach its climax after 1974, when the rate of decentralization slowed to a trickle and the capital experienced sharp blue-collar job loss. Yet the underlying problem of growing appetites for manufacturing investments and a shrinking pie of decentralization jobs was immediately apparent in 1963 and it underpinned the worsening tensions over the next decade.

Defending a strong decentralization policy put the DATAR in a delicate position. The agency at once maintained that its efforts were needed to steer investments out to the provinces and that they did not aggravate the downturn of Paris region manufacturing. In 1972, the DATAR's top industrial expert, Pierre Durand, laid out the basic arguments in defense of this stance. First of all, Durand denied that deindustrialization was happening at all. Job losses had only reduced the region's workforce to the levels of the mid-1950s—when they had seemed alarming enough to warrant *dirigiste* controls in the first place. Indeed, many of the capital's manufacturers complained of growing labor shortages and key sectors, such as the car industry, turned to immigrant labor in unprecedented proportions.[19] Secondly, Durand suggested that even a decline in manufacturing jobs would simply be a lull before a new cycle of industrial growth again raised employment levels in the capital. For over a century, Paris had been the growth pole of national manufacturing, first concentrating the development of new sectors and then, in a second phase, spinning off production jobs as work became more standardized. Durand believed that this cycle would repeat itself in a new round of development.[20]

Durand was certainly not alone in underestimating the speed and magnitude of the Paris region's future deindustrialization—an unpredictable novelty in the capital's modern history.[21] On the other hand, the DATAR was not unhappy to see the capital's manufacturing base shrink. Durand recycled the venerable discourse that Paris was an

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[18] Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation," 104-105; Ferniot, *La Décentralisation industrielle*, 18-21, 86-88.
[19] Pierre Durand, *Industrie et régions: L'aménagement industriel du territoire* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1972), 157-158.
[20] Ibid., 180.
[21] In 1965 the INSEE was still recording greater manufacturing growth in the Paris region than foreseen in the Plan. "Résultats de la consultation des régions en matière d'emploi industriel," ca. 1965, CAC 19930278/110.

overgrown and unruly metropolis.[22] The nativist strain of *aménagement du territoire* also resurfaced in his argument. In Durand's eyes, provincial Frenchmen had a priority over foreign immigrants, who now made up a substantial proportion of the Paris region's industrial workforce.[23] The DATAR official also pointed to the tremendous growth in the Paris region's service sector, which provided a replacement for lost factory work. This faith in workforce reconversion underestimated the fact that many industrial workers lacked the skills necessary for these new service jobs.

Durand's final argument was that decentralization counted for relatively little job loss in any case. The main sources of industrial layoffs in the Paris region were factory shutdowns, in-site cutbacks, and the deconcentration of production to the capital's outlying suburbs. In short, the plight of blue-collar *banlieues* was mainly a problem of corporate restructuring, economic slowdown, and the diminishing attractiveness of urban production sites—not the competition from provincial communities. Where territorial planning did enter into play, it was mostly the fault of the DRP, not the DATAR.[24] It was true that in 1972 decentralization played a relatively small role in deindustrialization, but Durand's explanation elided a longer story.[25] Decentralization, as we saw, was a major source of Parisian job loss. Simply, its impact had occurred earlier—in a movement of investments to the provinces that gained steam in the 1950s, crested in 1962, and had declined to low levels by the time Durand spoke. Decentralization mostly occurred through the buildup of new factories during the period of postwar expansion, followed by cutbacks in the Paris region at a later date, often after 1974.[26] This time-lag shrouded the relationship between provincial development and Parisian retrenchment.

This two-phase history might be narrated as an unfortunate irony—in which the Trente Glorieuses fostered expectations of mutual growth that the economic recession then disappointed—were it not for the fact that French planners had theorized such an outcome in the 1940s and pursued it ever since. Gabriel Dessus, the director of the Vichy

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[22] Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 15-17.
[23] Ibid., 157-158. For a similar stance by François Essig a few years later, and more generally on the treatment of immigrant workers as job levels dropped, see Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 318, 321-322.
[24] Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 158.
[25] Bastié, *Nouvelle histoire de Paris*, 166; Ferniot, *La Décentralisation industrielle*, 84-87, 97.
[26] Only about 20 percent of all total decentralization jobs were created after 1970, and just 6.5 percent after 1974. Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 54.

studies, publicly articulated the plan of building up provincial production during a time of expansion in preparation for Parisian cutbacks at a later date. This strategy was meant to mute the danger that decentralization posed to Paris' working class during the initial phase of reinvestment—as indeed happened with the passage of strong decentralization measures in 1955—and play down the role of state intervention in ultimate cutbacks, as Pierre Durand did in 1972.[27] Dessus was even prescient about the timing of this gradual deindustrialization process. In 1949, he wrote that it would take two or three decades for the Paris region's major factories to become obsolete, allowing the final transfer of production. This estimate was stunningly accurate for some of early planners' emblematic targets. Citroën, for instance, planned its departure from the fifteenth arrondissement in the mid-1960s and stopped production in 1975.[28]

The company that best captured the long and complex interaction between anti-Parisian planning and deindustrialization processes was the "prototype" of French decentralization: Renault's vast car factories at Billancourt. This story lasted a half-century. State and corporate leaders began planning the reduction of France's "workers' fortress" in the 1930s and 1940s as a reaction to the menace of war and militant workers, saw their plans stalled out by three decades of phenomenal postwar growth, only began shrinking the site in the 1970s, and announced the final closure of a much-reduced factory in 1989. Renault followed the two-step decentralization process theorized by Dessus. Postwar expansion allowed the automaker to become the nation's leader in decentralized job creation without making a dent in its Paris region workforce, making Billancourt an emblem of job stability and planners' inability to control the capital's manufacturers. Yet the company's agreement to shrink the site dated to its 1950 convention with the MRU and a dozen years later corporate executives again studied the abandonment of the cramped and dilapidated factories. An unexpected jump in demand again prevented their program. After 1974, however, the automaker had plants and workers in excess, and Billancourt could not compete with those modern provincial

[27] See chapter two and Gabriel Dessus, ed., *Matériaux pour une géographie volontaire de l'industrie française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949), 33, see also 31, 91, 95.
[28] See the dossier in CAC 19900583/9 for internal negotiations on this issue. A good overview is Querenet, "Note pour M. le Directeur du Cabinet: historique du 'dossier Citroën,'" 3/28/1966. For Citroën's initial propositions for relocation, see "Aménagement Citroën," November 1965, CAC 19910817/12.

factories subsidized by decentralization policy during the two previous decades. The site was finally headed toward obsolescence.[29]

Billancourt got an unexpected lease on life in 1981. The new Left government teamed up with Renault's unions in defense of this emblem of the French labor movement. But this was a rearguard struggle that only underscored the changes which had undermined Parisian manufacturing in the two previous decades. Billancourt had once symbolized the solidity of the region's industrial apparatus—a mass of fixed capital and worker power that no amount of government constraint or incentives could overcome. Less than a generation later, however, the site was one of the last vestiges of integrated assembly lines on the outskirts of Paris; state *dirigisme* and subsidies were now required to preserve it. This was a costly proposition that did not fit with the tight budgets of the company and the French government. When Renault announced Billancourt's closure in 1989, it finally fulfilled decentralization project announced a half-century earlier.[30]

Perhaps the "Malthusian" planners in power from the 1930s to the 1950s had the last word after all. The trends revealed in 1968 certainly responded to their vision. In 1944, Jean-François Gravier recommended removing 400,000 industrial jobs from the Paris region; three decades later, the region had lost 500,000 of them, contributing to the demographic stabilization demanded for decades.[31] In the intervening years, however, decentralization policy had a complex and often ironic relationship to urban and industrial trends. The proponents of containment obtained few concrete results in their

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[29] By 1974, Renault's direction was posing the question of an abandonment of the Billancourt site, citing both the squeezing of labor residencies out of Paris and the lack of space in the regulated urban environment. Michel Freyssenet, *Division du travail et mobilisation quotidienne de la main-d'œuvre: Les cas Renault et Fiat* (Paris: Centre de Sociologie Urbaine, 1979), 119-121; Jean-Louis Loubet, "Les stratégies industrielles et les hommes," in *Renault sur Seine: Hommes et lieux de mémoires de l'industrie automobile*, ed. Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, and Émile Temime (Paris: La Découverte, 2007), 33-36.

[30] Loubet, "Les stratégies industrielles et les hommes," 33-36; Jean-Louis Loubet, Nicolas Hatzfeld, and Alain Michel, *Ile Seguin: Des Renault et des hommes* (Paris: ETAI, 2004), 140-170; Nicolas Hatzfeld et al., "Renault-Billancourt," in *Mémoires du travail à Paris: Faubourg des métallos, Austerlitz-Salpêtrière, Renault-Billancourt*, ed. Christian Chevandier and Michel Pigenet (Paris: Creaphis Editions, 2008), 284-285.

Billancourt was one of the last large assembly lines in old industrial suburbs, Bernard Dezert, "Désindustrialisation et reconversion industrielle dans les vieilles villes industrielles de région parisienne (petite couronne)," *Revue géographique de l'Est* 25 (1985): 189.

[31] Gravier, "Les Justifications humaines de la décentralisation industrielle et ses modalités," August 1944, MRU CAC 19770777/3; Girault, "Industrialisation et ouvriérisation," 104.

own day. Only the intensification of growth around Paris—the very sign of their failure—finally legitimated the approval of their policies. On the other hand, these early technocrats laid the groundwork for a distinctive regime of negative controls on industrial growth and positive incentives for factory flight, which worked with the logics of corporate restructuring and urban redevelopment to obtain the rapid reversal of a century-long concentration.

Where French planners proved the most naive was in their conception of territorial planning as a means of social and political reform. The experts of the 1930s and 1940s wrote that industrial decentralization would give urban workers a better life in the countryside, eliminating the working-class discontent, radicalism, and sense of segregated isolation associated with the Paris red belt. In reality, the flight of blue-collar jobs out of the capital stranded many working people with dwindling opportunities. The immigrants recruited to work Paris region industries in the Trente Glorieuses were especially hard hit by the following downturn.[32] As the red belt gave way to the "Black belt," in Tyler Stovall's evocative phrase, it became clear that factory flight had only aggravated the sense of alienation and marginalization at the heart of the Republic.[33]

2. Taylorist Industrialization: Integration and Inequality

The wave of industrial decentralization that occurred in the 1950s and the 1960s created a historically unique injection of outside investments into provincial economies. No amount of government subsidies and improved infrastructure would replicate this simple development recipe of tremendous job growth in Paris, available labor in surrounding regions, and factory standardization, which both allowed and encouraged workforce restructuring.[34] This conjuncture created an exceptional opportunity for state officials to direct investments in accordance with the geography of social needs and political circumscriptions. Yet the regional distribution and the quality of new jobs revealed the severe limits of the government's action. Even though the clustering of new factories near Paris and the predominance of low-skill branch plants were apparent from

[32] Vasseur, *Les Orientations de la politique d'aménagement du territoire*, 32.
[33] Tyler Stovall, "From Red Belt to Black Belt: Race, Class, and Urban Marginality in Twentieth-Century Paris," in *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France*, ed. Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall (Raleigh: Duke University Press, 2003).
[34] Michel Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton 1950-2000* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1993), 127.

the beginning of decentralization policy, government officials only modified these business logics at the margins. Demands for an acceleration of regional job creation and the contestation of unskilled branch plants during May 1968 and the following years expressed widespread disappointment with the regional policy, even before the economic crisis aggravated the plight of the Hexagon's working people and sent decentralization rates plummeting.

Perhaps the central irony in French *aménagement du territoire* was the chronological divergence between the actual movement of industrial decentralization and the political hopes invested in it.[35] As we saw, the rate of decentralized job creation crested and began to decline in 1963. The very same year, the DATAR was created to accelerate regional development, and local governments were investing ever greater sums of money in the hopes of attracting Parisian manufacturers. Thanks to government oversight, the 1963 dip was immediately apparent. Provincial groups blamed the DRP's progrowth program and the government's effort to rein in inflation (the *plan de stabilisation* of 1963-1965), not without reason.[36] Yet the negative trend line was a structural problem. The French model of decentralization had passed its prime, disappointing a development regime based on the expectation that the capital's growth would provide work for the nation.

There were three alternative models for provincial development, each of which had distinct limits. The first was promoting the development of existing provincial industries. In many respects, this goal dovetailed with the courting of outside investors; new infrastructures such as industrial parks and regional development committees served both business constituencies. Until the 1970s, however, the Finance Ministry limited subsidies for this endogenous job creation, for a simple reason: restricting incentives to decentralizing businesses was the only easy way to place a limit on the public subsidization of industry.[37] A second alternative was the decentralization of Paris' booming service sector. Government planners began trying to decentralize state

[35] Philippe Aydalot, "L'aménagement du territoire en France: une tentative de bilan," *L'espace géographique: régions, environnement, aménagement* 7 (1978): 246.
[36] For instance, Michel Phlipponneau, *La Gauche et les régions* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1967), 90-91.
[37] Aubert, directeur de cabinet du Ministre de l'Intérieur to prefects, "Développement industriel régional: harmonisation des aides de l'État et des Collectivités locales," 23 September 1965, CAEF B/16131; Pierre-Brossolette, "Note pour le Ministre," 2 July 1971, and Pfeiffer, "Note pour le Ministre," 9 February 1971, CAEF 1A/224; dossier on the reform of subsidies regime, December 1971, CAEF 1A/124.

administration jobs in 1955 and private sector ones in 1964, creating a new subsidy for this purpose in 1967. But it proved far harder to move services than factories. By the early 1980s, tertiary decentralization had only created 70,000 private-sector jobs—one-seventh the tally for industrial decentralization.[38]

Foreign industrial investments, the final path to regional development, created as many provincial jobs between 1971 and 1977 alone as all private tertiary decentralization. Better still, foreign manufacturers were more willing to create factories in priority zones than their French counterparts—suggesting that the centralism of Parisian industrialists did owe something to national business culture. In this realm, however, the political framework of a national economy lagged behind the reality of growing international investments during the 1960s. Charles de Gaulle was an economic nationalist. He limited the DATAR's courting of foreign investors and his quashing of several prominent projects turned American businesses to the Hexagon's more welcoming neighbors. It was only when the general left office in 1969 that the new president, Georges Pompidou, announced a shift in policy. The DATAR now pursued foreign investments with alacrity, rapidly opening offices in cities from New York to Frankfurt and Tokyo in a handful of years. By the time it got the ball rolling, however, the French economy was in crisis.[39]

During the golden age of *aménagement du territoire*, the decentralization of Parisian industry thus remained the lynchpin of French regional policy. The total number of jobs created by decentralization operations peaked out at 600,000 in 1975, at which point layoffs trimmed back the total and it became harder to distinguish the growth of decentralized factories from the general expansion of provincial industry. This figure represented about 10 percent of France's industrial workforce. As such, Paris decentralization was one of the main forces in the postwar remapping of French industry,

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[38] The DATAR also counted 40,000 public service jobs decentralized. Jean-Paul Laborie, Priscilla de Roo, and Jean-François Langumier, *La Politique française d'aménagement du territoire de 1950 à 1985* (Paris: Documentation française, 1985), 90; Hugh D. Clout, "France," in *Regional Development in Western Europe*, ed. Hugh D. Clout (New York: Wiley, 1975), 131-133. For actors' testimonies, see Jean Labasse, "Métropoles d'équilibre et décentralisation tertiaire: genèse et vicissitudes," in *L' Aménagement du territoire, 1958-1974*, ed. François Caron, ed. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); Michel Colot, "La politique des métropoles d'équilibre, 1964-1974," in *L' Aménagement du territoire, 1958-1974*, ed. François Caron, ed. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999), 89-92.

[39] François Essig, *DATAR: Des régions et des hommes* (Montréal: Stanké, 1979), 243-255.

but it was not strong enough to upend the economic geography inherited from the early twentieth century.[40]

Regional and local differences were crucial on this score. The overwhelming bulk of manufacturing spin-offs stayed within a few hours' driving time of Paris.[41] Decentralization was thus an important factor in homogenizing industrialization rates across the northern third of the hexagon—a trend aided negatively by the severe retraction of the northeast manufacturing belt—but was too weak to substantially alter southern economies. This split in decentralization rates altered the "two Frances" schema. The old northeast/southwest binary shifted into a division between a manufacturing north, tightly organized around Paris, and a south with less blue-collar work but also less dependency on the capital.[42] At a more local level, the gradually expanding "frontier" of decentralization rates often cut through regions and even departments, so that both the quantity and quality of jobs could differ radically within these administrative units. For example, in the Centre region, to the south of Paris, towns closest to the capital were inundated with new factories. Labor shortages there gradually pushed decentralization into rural areas and communities further south, but this more peripheral development provided fewer jobs, with worse salaries and more often in sectors in decline, such as textiles.[43]

The clustering of new factories close to Paris severely limited the government's ability to steer growth to designated priority zones.[44] The DATAR never overcame the two main limits of its geographic *dirigisme*. On the "push" end of the equation, efforts to force manufacturers further away from Paris caused manufacturers to simply stay in the capital. On the "pull" end, the Finance Ministry kept regional development subsidies far lower than in many neighboring countries.[45] Yet it is easy to underestimate the positive

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[40] Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 29, 182. France and Great Britain had very similar rates of industrial decentralization: Britain marked 540,000 decentralized jobs between 1945 and 1971, which counted for 8 percent of its total industrial workforce. Philippe Aydalot, *Économie régionale et urbaine* (Paris: Economica, 1985), 90-91.
[41] Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 112.
[42] Félix Damette and Jaques Scheibling, *Le Territoire français: Permanences et mutations* (Paris: Hachette, 2003), 92-95; Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 178-182.
[43] Paul Bachelard, "La région Centre," *Cahiers du Centre de recherches analyse de l'espace* (1983).
[44] Aydalot, "L'aménagement du territoire en France: une tentative de bilan," 246.
[45] Clout estimated that France spent just one-tenth as much as Great Britain on regional development aid in the early 1970s. Clout, "France," 127.

impact of decentralization. To begin with, the rural areas and declining industrial towns surrounding the Paris region would themselves have qualified as priority zones if decentralization had not provided so many new jobs. In fact, unemployment in towns like Reims and Amiens—which were soon inundated with factories—was one of the initial justifications for new decentralization measures in 1954 and 1955.[46] Secondly, a focus on the central state hides the impact of local government incentives, which had a contradictory relationship to redistributionist ideals. On the one hand, provincial officials courted Parisian manufacturers to provide better opportunities for local constituents, who often faced a choice between emigration and low salaries in traditional sectors. It was only in relation to even poorer communities further from Paris that such efforts could seem like a travesty to redistributive logics, by undercutting the administration's ability to steer jobs to poorer priority zones.

Finally, overall growth rates hide the fact that state efforts at targeted job creation had widely variable outcomes. Unsurprisingly, planners shaped the geography of new industrialization best when a strong political will coincided with a period of growth, and when communities in need were relatively close to Paris. The government achieved good results when it dramatically hiked subsidies in 1959 for seven coal, textiles, and shipbuilding areas hit hard by downturns. A political problem prevented further success: government planners were unable prevent the generalization of these exceptional measures to other problem areas, diluting their impact.[47] By contrast, the economic conjuncture was in large part to blame for the disappointing results of the Fourth and Fifth Plans. A substantial proportion of the jobs that were created during the mid-1960s went to priority zones, as promised, but overall manufacturing investments were lagging. When the DATAR's growing subsidies met a new wave of industrial investments after 1967, targeted job creation spiked back upward.[48] Overall, Brittany and the northeast manufacturing belt were the two clearest beneficiaries of targeted job creation. In both cases, the convergence of unparalleled government attention, strong local efforts, and the

[46] Likewise, Without industrial decentralization, most communities in the Centre region would have stagnated. Bachelard, "La région Centre."
[47] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 233-234.
[48] Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 88-90. The bulk of the upswing came from increased decentralization in the auto industry. See the debates on this upward spike, which pitted the DATAR against the Finance Ministry, which was alarmed by the increase in the decentralization subsidies it had to pay out, in CAEF 2A/16 and CIAT minutes of 10 November 1969, CAC 19860219.

availability of labor visibly distorted the natural radius of Paris decentralization towards these priority regions.[49]

Social and political movements—around factory layoffs and the issue of rural poverty—drove the repeated increases in government subsidies for priority zones. Political leadership in Paris was just as crucial for achieving results, both in terms of key projects and broader industrialization rates. Decentralization was taken to its historic zenith in the early 1960s by a pair of *dirigiste* leaders who were heavily invested in developing poor regions: Prime Minister Michel Debré and his minister of Industry, Jean-Marcel Jeanneney. The two men benefited from a favorable economic conjuncture, but they also put exceptional pressure on national corporations to invest in priority zones and fought a backlash against *dirigisme* by top economic policymakers within the administration.[50] Breton regionalists complained about Debré's extreme Jacobinism when he was in office, but once he left Matignon in 1962 they mourned his forceful leadership. As Georges Pierret, the CELIB's industrial expert, said in an internal meeting, Debré's "véritable 'forcing'...sur la grande industrie française" had been crucial in accelerating the region's industrialization. Georges Pompidou, Debré's successor, was far less concerned with regional job creation, and decentralization to Brittany dropped off considerably.[51] Breton boosters were thus right to argue that, whatever their limits and negative consequences, state pressure and subsidies could make a difference. On the other hand, for the majority of provincial communities—whether they were further from Paris or were less effective in obtaining the administration's attention—the wave of industrial decentralization brought little help indeed.

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[49] Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 112, 121-122.

[50] During Debré's time in office (1959-1962), he faced simultaneous crises in Brittany, a number of declining industrial basins, and Algeria. He even convoked a group of corporate executives in 1961 to insist that they move production to Brittany. Debré told the businessmen that they had a "responsabilité devant la Nation." More to the point, he wrote, "Les entreprises...passent leur temps à venir nous demander de l'aide. Il faut leur faire savoir que, si elles n'investissent pas à Saint-Nazaire, ce ne sera plus la peine de venir nous solliciter. La réponse sera non, non et non!" Eric Kocher-Marboeuf, *Le Patricien et le Général: Jean-Marcel Jeanneney et Charles de Gaulle, 1958-1969* (Paris: Comité pour l'Histoire économique et financière de la France, 2003), 345, 354-359; Eric Kocher-Marboeuf, "L'expansion industrielle au service de l'ambition nationale," in *Michel Debré, Premier ministre, 1959-1962*, ed. Serge Berstein, et al. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2005), 319-320, 323, 328-330; Daniel Lefeuvre, *Chère Algérie: La France et sa colonie, 1930-1962* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005), 445.

[51] Pierret, "L'industrialisation de la Bretagne, amorcée en 1961-62, est-elle compromise en 1963-64?" undated note, ADIV 30J/125.

As much as the number of jobs created and their geographic distribution, it was the quality of new factory work that disappointed the hopes placed in regional policy. Typically Taylorist industries, led by auto and electronics assembly, created the bulk of new jobs.[52] Most manufacturers only decentralized low-skill assembly work, maintaining specialized production in the Paris region; all but the smallest companies kept their headquarters in or near the capital. Their foremost concern in choosing new locations was therefore to find sufficient pools of cheap unskilled labor, coupled with a preference for a business-friendly environment and basic infrastructures like roads and factory space.[53] As a result, professional power remained heavily concentrated in the Paris region; most provincial workers faced monotonous tasks, limited opportunities for promotion, and factory executives imported from the outside. The DATAR pointed out that the increased geographic separation of high-skill and low-skill work was a broader trend in provincial industry, as the standardization of traditional industries eliminated skilled work and Parisian corporations bought out local firms. All the same, even the DATAR could not deny that branch-plant industrialization was a social problem, which was all the more disappointing given that it was subsidized by the government.[54]

Yet disparities in skill rates provide a static portrait of what were in fact dynamic work relationships. Similar industrial structures could result in a wide variety of corporate strategies and local outcomes.[55] The economist Philippe Aydalot made this point well in a 1981 study of decentralization in twenty-five medium-sized cities. All of these towns played a similar role—"la fonction de rassembleur de force de travail 'banale'" for low-skill plants—but their local histories differed tremendously. Some manufacturers stayed close to Paris, accepting higher wages and stronger unions in order to maintain their new plants' proximity to headquarters, while others invested in greater transportation times to find an isolated labor market. These choices of location reflected divergent social ideals: whether to privilege rural recruitment or target declining manufacturing towns, promote feminization or turn to immigrant labor. Last but

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[52] Bastié and Verlaque, "Trente ans de décentralisation," 89.
[53] Jean Bastié and Christian Verlaque, "Un quart de siècle de décentralisation industrielle: 1954-1980, première partie," *Cahiers du Centre de recherches analyse de l'espace* 1 (1981): 79.
[54] Durand, *Industrie et régions*, 170. The nascent decentralization in the services sector followed this trend, with Paris mainly spinning off routinized low-skill office work. Aydalot, *Économie régionale et urbaine*.
[55] Doreen Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labor: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

certainly not least, salaries and benefits differed greatly as local wage traditions criss-crossed corporate norms, the balance of the job market, and workers' mobilization. Aydalot found a number of surprising outcomes. Former peasants could earn more than trained workers, if the latter were desperate for a job. Some companies grafted Parisian Fordism onto the venerable traditions of paternalism and social stability in declining industrial "districts" such as the Choletais basin.[56]

Social movements and state intervention were crucial in determining the quality of new jobs and the degree of inequality between Parisian and provincial sites. I have argued that the tension between attracting jobs and demanding good jobs ran throughout the history of French regional policy. Already under Vichy, government planners faced a clear contradiction. On the one hand, they embraced the ideal of a holistic provincial renaissance; on the other hand, the importance of work standardization and cheap labor for obtaining immediate results led them to proselytize the "Taylorization of territory" and limit workers' opportunities. Provincial workers and growth coalitions faced similar dilemmas, as the case of Citroën-Rennes shows. Breton boosters pioneered the packaging of cheap and docile labor for outside investors, but they were quickly confronted with the tension between an authoritarian employer and a regional coalition that included unionists, the Left, and progressive Catholics. In this context, Breton expectations about postwar industrialization changed rapidly and the conflict between job creation and worker dignity divided the community in complicated ways.

For labor relations more than any other aspect of regional development, 1968 was a turning point. Strikes in provincial branch plants not only empowered individual workers, but also shattered assumptions that decentralized labor was inherently docile. National labor gains, meanwhile, often benefited provincial workers disproportionately. May 1968 finally abolished the geographic differentials (*abattements*) in the minimum wage. It had taken social insurrection to impose a principle of national equality that business interests—brandishing a discourse of regional difference and the menace of provincial unemployment—had successfully resisted for more than three decades.[57] Labor unions also obtained a substantial increase in the minimum wage, which was

[56] Philippe Aydalot, "Politique de localisation des entreprises et marché du travail," *Revue d'économie régionale et urbaine* (1981).
[57] Marguerite Perrot, "Les salaires publics et privés depuis 1968," *Économie et statistique* 20 (1971): 16-17.

entirely replaced in 1970 by a more generous formula, the *salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance* (SMIC).[58] New national accords by branch and company also improved the situation of many provincial workers, increasing demands for the alignment of wages and work conditions on those of Paris region sites.

On the other hand, the gains of 1968 were uneven and often short-lived. France's national business association, the Conseil national du patronat français (CNPF), proclaimed a progressive reform of labor relations. In reality, factory managers commonly refused to apply national accords and repressed unionization efforts—sometimes violently and not rarely with the help of state officials.[59] Provincial workers' support of strikes differed heavily both within and between factories. This variable mobilization underscored the continued gap between union leaders and the "new working class" created by decentralization. Just as importantly, it reflected the precarious job situation of many provincial workers.[60] The labor gains of 1968-1973 were underpinned by a positive national job market, but in much of rural and small-town France jobs remained too rare to jeopardize. And as France's manufacturing heartland massively shed jobs, the defensive posture once reserved for less industrialized areas increasingly reflected the national mainstream.[61] The prominence of demands to "vivre au pays" and "travailler au pays" in the social movements of May 1968 and its aftermath underscored the fact that beneath the low official unemployment of the Trente Glorieuses, millions of people still suffered poor wages and limited work options in their community.[62] And the minimum wage hikes illustrated the fact that workers' gains came with the risk of driving employers away, as the new SMIC accelerated the flow of cheap-labor employers overseas.[63]

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[58] The SMIC, instituted in 1970, had no geographic differentiation. Norbert Olszak, *Histoire du droit du travail* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 74; François Sellier, *La Confrontation sociale en France, 1936-1981* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1984), 193-194; Michel Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne* (St. Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1970), 202-203.
[59] Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 304-307.
[60] Vincent Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons: Conflits d'usines, conflits identitaires en Bretagne dans les années 68* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008).
[61] Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 314-323.
[62] The historian of worker movements in Brittany, Vincent Porhel, notes that the "volonté de vivre, et donc de travailler, au pays" was the "slogan...le plus unificateur qui soit tout au long de la période [des années 1960-70]." Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 278.
[63] CIAT minutes of 1 October 1969, CAC 19860219; Olszak, *Histoire du droit du travail*, 74. The regional wage gap itself remained substantial, despite the massive postwar decentralization of industry. In 1970,

In sum, if the 1974 economic crisis incontestably aggravated workers' situation, the erosion of regional job bases had often begun in the preceding years, and in many areas precariousness existed throughout the Trente Glorieuses.[64] The same is true of targeted job creation. The basic contradiction between a declining number of decentralization jobs and a growing set of priority zones began in the 1960s. Like workers, meanwhile, the DATAR was engaged in an increasingly uphill battle to prevent French manufacturers from transferring production to low-wage countries.[65] Nonetheless, the economic crisis suddenly and fundamentally altered the situation, generalizing unemployment and all but eliminating industrial decentralization. In 1975, the government announced a major revision of *aménagement du territoire*, abandoning its national map of priority zones and finally accepting to subsidize the creation of jobs by existing provincial firms. The DATAR redoubled its efforts in mass-reconversion areas, such as the northeast steel towns, but the 1955 idea of a nationwide system for steering jobs to communities in need was now defunct.[66]

In a 1974 book calling for "une géographie de la liberté," Jérôme Monod, the head of the DATAR, sensationally expressed the notion that citizens had a right to a decent job close to home.[67] Monod denounced regional migration as "cet exode immuable et silencieux, ces déportations pacifiques," and proclaimed French people's desire to "vivre au pays." As such, only regional policy could offer "les conditions concrètes de la liberté. Celle de vivre un métier ou une profession d'aujourd'hui dans un environnement où des racines vivantes vous ont fixé." This Gaullist modernizer echoed the agrarian language of the Vichy studies, denouncing "une malédiction: l'univers de la grande ville et du grand ensemble, dur à la famille, brutal aux relations des communautés humaines, destructeur de genres de vie originaux et des valeurs qu'ils exprimaient." But

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regional differences remained substantial. The average worker's salary in the poor mountainous department of Lozère was 9,223 francs per year, 11,035 in the rural Normandy department of La Manche, and 17,398 in the wealthy Paris-region department of Hauts-de-Seine. Bernard Dézert and Christian Verlaque, *L'Espace industriel* (Paris: Masson, 1978), 104-106. For a detailed look at the case of Brittany, see Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 194-204.

[64] Vigna, *L'Insubordination ouvrière*, 329-330.

[65] François Essig, *En marche pour le XXIe siècle: Souvenirs d'un témoin engagé* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), 77.

[66] Essig, *DATAR*, 53; Essig, *En marche pour le XXIe siècle: Souvenirs d'un témoin engagé*, 74-80.

[67] Jérôme Monod, *Transformation d'un pays, pour une géographie de la liberté* (Paris: Fayard, 1974).

his language of workers' rights had been enshrined in 1955 in response to concrete social struggles, and his text was an explicit response to May 1968.[68]

By the time Monod's book went to press, the economic downturn made it obsolete. The notion of a state responsibility to manage the changing fortunes of local places would survive until the early 1980s, but those "conditions concrètes de la liberté" were impossible to fulfill in an era of massive workforce cutbacks at home and the transfer of manufacturing overseas. Yet the DATAR leader's call for a renewed geographic *dirigisme* said as much about the disappointment of earlier hopes as about the rupture of 1974. For two decades of exceptional growth, the decentralization of factory work gave hundreds of thousands of provincial residents a new job close to home and a form of integration—however unequal—in national corporations and labor compromises. On the other hand, neither the amount nor the geography of industrial decentralization responded to the demand for new employment as provincial farms, factories, and shops shed millions of jobs. Decentralization left a majority of French regions essentially untouched. Thousands of other communities received too little work, were on the contrary inundated with jobs and migrants, or were quickly disappointed by the poor quality of modern factory work. As a result, massive blue-collar migration to urban centers and precarious job situations persisted in the midst of unprecedented national growth. As May 1968 and its aftermath made clear, the state delivery of work to the nation's communities remained a disappointed promise in the final years of the Trente Glorieuses.

3. The Provincial Metropolis: Growth Poles and Elite Enclaves

Postwar regional policy cannot be reduced to the spread of Fordist branch plants piloted from Paris. From the outset, *aménagement du territoire* contained ambitious proposals for a higher path to development, in which every French region would get a cutting-edge, higher-skill, and self-sustaining industrial base. This ideal motivated efforts to decentralize public administrations and research after 1955, and in the 1960s the DATAR launched one of the most ambitious applications of growth-pole theory in Europe.[69] Here too historic successes mixed with major disappointments. Compared to

[68] Ibid., 1-2.
[69] Peter Hall, *Urban and Regional Planning* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 157.

the blue-collar economy of Taylorized branch plants, high-tech industrialization remained more concentrated in major urban centers and a larger percentage of new jobs went to well-trained migrants from Paris and other French regions. Hopes that a first round of polarized growth would give way to a gradual diffusion of benefits to the working class and regional hinterlands encountered severe limits, even before the economic crisis dampened expectations for blue-collar spin-offs.

Growth poles came in two forms: the heavy-industry variety and the metropolitan "technopolis" version. The former were expensive and conflict-ridden blunders. Five giant industrial ports were built, giving France's steel and petrochemicals industries coastal sites and providing a heavy-industry base for regional economies. The largest project, at Fos-sur-Mer near Marseille, epitomized the dangers of such oversized investments. The conflicts created by the smokestack complex turned into a veritable emblem of internal colonialism, as the DATAR used its new metropolitan agency to impose its program and eliminated the political opposition through new inter-municipal bodies. The boom-and-bust cycle of massive urbanization drew in 18,000 construction workers, who lived in precarious housing for years before facing layoffs as programs ended. In order to fill its new industrial parks, the government massively subsidized the shift of steel production from Lorraine—already suffering from a wrenching reconversion—to the new coastal sites. Even the attack on working-class Paris appeared modest compared to this state-led deindustrialization of France's manufacturing belt. The 1974 downturn provided the *coup de grâce*. The DATAR's job-creation estimates, which were exaggerated before the crisis, now appeared delirious. A decade after opening, the port complexes were on the government's list of economic reconversion zones and their blue-collar new towns benefited from social development for problem neighborhoods.[70]

By this comparison, white-collar development in large urban centers was a success story. The DATAR designated eight provincial capitals as *métropoles d'équilibre*. Each city received a coordinated set of cutting-edge industries, research

[70] Michael Dunford, *Capital, the State, and Regional Development* (London: Pion, 1988), chapters 10-12 and 309, 344-346; Laborie, Roo, and Langumier, *La Politique française d'aménagement du territoire*, 95-96; Bernard Paillard, *Damnation de Fos* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1981); Pierre Merlin, *L'Aménagement du territoire* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002), 94-96.

facilities, and university departments, as well as ambitious city plans, services, and other top-notch economic activities.[71] Industries such as electronics in Rennes, aircraft in Toulouse, and nuclear research in Grenoble owed a good deal to the programs established in the 1960s. And by and large, regional policy did provide the amenities that made these cities better places to live and work, from roads, sanitation, and housing to new university campuses and business offices. Finally, despite their extremely centralized application, the DATAR's metropolitan programs often helped big city mayors establish unprecedented municipal institutions for pursuing economic growth. In this version, national planning was the basis for a mutually beneficial relationship, not the imperialistic stand-off occurring at Fos-sur-Mer.[72]

Toulouse was the most successful of these metropolitan projects. The southwestern city was an early site of aircraft production—reinforced, as we saw, by the decentralizations of the 1930s—but by the 1950s its economy was on the brink of collapse. It was the designation of Toulouse as a growth pole in the 1960s that turned the city into a major center of aeronautics research and production. The DATAR decentralized aircraft manufacturers and major government contracts—including for France's two emblematic passenger planes, the Caravelle and the Concorde—the space institute Centre national d'études spatiales (CNES), and the nation's elite aviation research schools (the Ecole nationale supérieure d'aéronautique and the Ecole nationale de l'aviation civile). The DATAR also provided the urban space for this industrial program, in the form of an American-style industrial park nestled among the rolling suburbs to the east of the city. The park contained expanded universities, aeronautics

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[71] Laborie, Roo, and Langumier, *La Politique française d'aménagement du territoire*, 34-35; Merlin, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 180-187.

[72] Benoît Littardi notes that one can find similar ententes between progrowth mayors and the Gaullist *aménagement du territoire* policy across party lines. He takes as examples the Socialist mayor of Besançon, Jean Minjoz (1953-1977); the MRP mayor of Rennes, Henri Fréville (also 1953-1977); and the Gaullist mayor of Reims, Jean Taittinger (1959-1977). All three were *maires bâtisseurs*—dynamic figures who became the local personification of postwar modernization during a long municipal reign. Despite their different party affiliations, each of these men developed a privileged relationship with the national administration to fund their increasingly aggressive policies of expansion. Finally, each one faced a political defeat in 1977, thanks in part to growing conflicts over their progrowth policies (Minjoz lost to another Socialist who was hostile to his alliance with the right). Except for the fact that his reign ended earlier, in 1971, Bazerque's career in Toulouse also followed this same trajectory. Benoît Littardi, "Une capitale régionale face à l'aménagement du territoire. L'exemple de la commune de Besançon (vers 1950-1977)," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 182-183.

laboratories, and other research facilities, as well as middle-class apartments for the city's new social elites.[73] The DATAR's program was a windfall for Toulouse's aggressively progrowth mayor, Louis Bazerque (1958-1971). Bazerque epitomized the new generation of "presidential" provincial mayors, establishing "a technobureaucratic dominion over the city that drastically undercut the older local practice of democratic municipalism," in the words of Toulouse historian Rosemary Wakeman.[74]

The Toulouse program underscored the elite bias of high-tech decentralization. Whereas most blue-collar Parisians only received a pink slip and severance pay when their factory moved to the provinces, the DATAR rolled out the red carpet to entice Parisian managers, engineers, professors, and students to move to Toulouse. The government planners arranged higher pay; better working, living, and sports facilities; and even a private plane and a mountain chalet for the aeronautics schools, to make up for the leisure attractions of the capital.[75] Toulouse's new research park was designed to separate these intellectual and industrial elites from the rest of the city in a dedicated environment; new white-collar suburbs furthered this project. This metropolitan isolation forged a separate urban class in much the same way that low-income *grands ensembles* were doing on the other side of town—or as the promotion of dispersed living did for rural workers, as in the case of Citroën-Rennes. As the "technopolis" fad spread, similar research parks were created in other French regions. They sprung up in the suburbs of existing cities, such as Grenoble, or from scratch as in the case of the new Sophia-Antipolis complex in the Côte d'Azur.[76]

The "multiplier" industries at the basis of the growth-pole idea often created far fewer spin-off jobs than initially imagined. Most remained tied into national production systems focused on Paris and thus had little need for local subcontractors. Costly research institutes also proved to be an unreliable source of local job creation, even when the conditions for such synergies seemed ideal. Brittany, for example, mixed both the high-skill and the low-skill ends of electronics production: new government laboratories

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[73] Rosemary Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 133-145, 182-204.
[74] Ibid., 109, 111-124.
[75] Ibid., 141-144.
[76] Rosemary Wakeman, "Dreaming the New Atlantis: Science and the Planning of Technopolis, 1955-1985," *Osiris* 18 (2003): 270. For a later date, see Patrick Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local: Une comparaison franco-britannique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993), 186-188.

and cheap female labor. Nonetheless, the links between the two remained disappointing. All told, electronics made up only ten percent of Brittany's new industrial jobs between 1954 and 1969—twice less than the auto industry and on par with the less glamorous food-processing sector.[77] Electronics engineering jobs were no assurance of empowerment for the Breton workers who did get them. When CSF opened an engineering unit in Brest, it was hailed as a welcome improvement from Taylorized branch plants, but Breton engineers soon found themselves in an analogous position as branch-plant workers. They chafed at a hierarchy imported from Paris and risked losing their jobs in CSF's merger with Thompson. This precarious situation was at the origin of the Brest plant's highly publicized strike in 1968, in which the engineers experimented with *autogestion*.[78]

At the outset, the metropolitan ideal was not just about white-collar elites whose dynamism would trickle down to other regional residents. Vibrant regional capitals and medium-sized towns were also meant to build up diversified blue-collar labor markets, in order to ward off the tendency to cyclical crises created by monoindustry economies. However, this ideal of concentrated industrialization clashed with the business logic of seeking out isolated labor markets and the political logic of spreading jobs to as many towns as possible. Too often, the possibility of planning diversified economies thus gave way to the reality of single-factory communities. As the planners of the 1940s understood well, the boom sectors of one generation went bust in the next. Even the most dynamic industries of the Trente Glorieuses, such as auto making and consumer electronics goods, soon created severe hardships in areas where they had become the dominant employer during postwar decentralization.[79]

Blue-collar workers were also supposed to benefit from a "trickle up" aspect of the growth-pole dynamic: once provincial cities possessed better urban amenities and

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[77] Fabrice Marzin, "Le rôle des politiques et des planificateurs dans le développement industriel de la Bretagne. Autour de la 'vocation électronique' de la Bretagne," in *Communications et territoires*, ed. Pierre-Noël Favennec (Paris: Lavoisier, 2006), 19-21.
[78] Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 61-112.
[79] Pierre Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires: L'économie d'archipel* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005 [1996]), 33-34. See for example Jean-Claude Daumas, "La décentralisation industrielle entre créations d'emplois et effets déstructurants. Le cas de Renault à Cléon (1951-1975)," in *La Politique d'aménagement du territoire: Racines, logiques et résultats*, ed. Patrice Caro, Olivier Dard, and Jean-Claude Daumas (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 193-194.

economic bases, the logic went, manufacturers would turn some of their low-skill branch plants into more well-rounded production units.[80] Overall, the skill levels and job diversity of provincial production sites did gradually grow closer to those found in the Paris region.[81] However, this equalizing dynamic could occur through job cutbacks as well as through a virtuous cycle of new investments. Citroën-Rennes epitomized the latter, progrowth version. The "stable" and cooperative workforce that earned Rennes a Taylorized assembly line in the 1960s proved equally desirable when Citroën introduced Japanese production techniques after the mid-1970s. The Rennes site thus received new investments and its workers benefited from job stability, even as the automaker cut back its Paris region sites. The company also blackmailed subcontractors into moving west to fulfill new just-in-time production logics, creating even more jobs around Rennes.[82] Just next door, however, the less progressive version of the transition to a higher-skill economy was occurring. As Rennes' electronics industry modernized in the 1970s, companies simultaneously created large numbers of engineering jobs and cut back blue-collar ones. The female assembly-line workers who had initially been so important for building up Brittany's "electronics vocation" now found themselves out of work as Rennes advanced toward a high-tech future.[83]

This new mix of blue-collar unemployment and the white-collar expansion has created a distinctive form of territorial inequalities since 1974. A network of dynamic urban centers are increasingly juxtaposed to stagnant regional hinterlands—a phenomenon of "metropolitanization" or "la France duale."[84] The landscape of these renewed disparities was already sketched out in 1960s, when the DATAR selected new provincial leaders and the DRP accelerated the renovation of the Paris region.[85] Both

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[80] Storper and Walker call this shift the emergence of "growth peripheries." Michael Storper and Richard Walker, *The Capitalist Imperative: Territory, Technology, and Industrial Growth* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1989), 189.
[81] Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 43. At the same time, the regional wage gap for similar categories of workers lessened (Veltz 53).
[82] Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 155; Yann Fournis, "Les nouveaux territoires de l'industrie automobile: Citroën à Rennes," in *Bretagne plurielle: Culture, territoire et politique*, ed. Nathalie Dugalès, Yann Fournis, and Tudi Kernalegenn (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 166-171.
[83] Marzin, "Le Rôle des politiques," 115-116; Phlipponneau, *Le Modèle industriel breton*, 154-155; M. Macé, "La Décentralisation industrielle en Bretagne," *Cahiers du Centre de recherches analyse de l'espace* 3-4 (1983): 35.
[84] Veltz, *Mondialisation, villes et territoires*, 40, 46.
[85] Ibid., 41.

agencies seized upon the growth pole concept to claim that these programs were part of integrated regional economies; investments in France's most competitive centers and economic elites would branch down into blue-collar strata and regional hinterlands. Yet such claims thinly veiled a series of inequalities created by the metropolitan ideal. State officials actively displaced Parisian workers to make way for global city development, maintained rural workers in the countryside to alleviate pressure on renovated metropolitan centers, and separated suburban research complexes from lower-income *grands ensembles*. Male engineers and female assembly-line workers rarely mixed in Brest's new electronics plants, and neither shared the working-class culture of the city's traditional blue-collar sectors.[86] Even before 1974 sent these workers on divergent tracks, the notion that industrialization would integrate territories and social groups was a strained one indeed.

4. Regional Development Orthodoxies Under Siege

The regional development decrees of 1955 consecrated an expansive vision of *aménagement du territoire*, in which the government had a special responsibility to develop France's regions while modernizing the entire national territory. This agenda was founded on the spatial Keynesian logic that despite its up-front cost, equalizing industry across the Hexagon was in the nation's best economic interest. This redistributionist ideal was immediately attacked. The goals of maximizing economic growth, preparing France for the new European competition, and reining in a political culture of provincial claims-making all provided arguments for drawing limits around the discourse of territorial equalization. This reaction had powerful proponents: the representatives of France's most prosperous regions, top administration officials in the Commissariat général du Plan (CGP) and the Finance Ministry, and business representatives who resented government efforts to direct them away from the Paris region and the European market. There was thus no period of triumphant spatial Keynesianism—only an ongoing tension between the new principle of equalization and the reinforcement of existing growth trends. By 1970, the very principle of redistribution faced an explicit attack in France's planning apparatus.

[86] Porhel, *Ouvriers bretons*, 72-74, 86.

On the eve of the economic crisis, a number of astute observers challenged the notion that the 1960s were a breakthrough of redistributionist logics in state programs.[87] French regional policy had a spotty record indeed. The principle of national equalization was consecrated by Vichy planners, but postwar reconstruction mostly reinforced the patterns of uneven development inherited from the interwar years. The redistribution announced in 1954-1955 initially proved weak in practice. Under the pressure of eastern politicians, the government proclaimed that redistribution could not come at the expense of France's wealthier regions or national growth—a principle that remained at the core of the state's regional development discourse—and the Finance Ministry cut back planning ambitions as soon as the regionalist minister Pierre Pflimlin left office at the end of 1955.[88]

Peripheral coalitions, frustrated by the slow pace of reform, mobilized to expand redistribution in the following years, but core regions mobilized just as vigorously against it. The *bête noire* of provincial politicians was the Paris Region District. Paul Delouvrier proclaimed a new era of mutual growth between Paris and the provinces, which was supposed to replace the antagonisms created by a negative containment policy, but in reality his plan for turning the capital into a world city soon absorbed a staggering amount of development investments.[89] The opposition between Paris and the provinces was an old one. The most novel aspect of regional redistribution was the split it created between western and eastern regions.[90] In 1962, a parliamentary coalition of underdeveloped regions pushed tensions to the brink of political turmoil, threatening to vote against the Fourth Plan if the government did not approve an amendment guaranteeing an immediate and comprehensive redistribution of state investments in their favor. President de Gaulle had to personally intervene to quash the law, declaring that

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[87] Phlipponneau, *Debout Bretagne*, 62-67.

[88] As a Finance Ministry note explained, the Budget and the Treasury "se sont émus des charges que [les programmes] pourraient imposer au trésor public." Some administrators even floated the idea of eliminating the PARs initiative altogether. Monier, note aux Inspecteurs généraux de l'Économie nationale du 29/6/56, CAEF B/45774.

[89] In 1962, the Social and Economic Council estimated that 54 percent of state capital expenses had gone to the Paris region. Phlipponneau, *La Gauche et les régions*, 92.

[90] Michel Debré explicitly likened the two territorial antagonisms, announcing "le risque de créer une opposition entre la France de l'Ouest et la France de l'Est, analogue à celle que certains dénoncent entre la Région parisienne et la province." Debré to Jérôme Monod, 26 June 1967, Michel Debré personal archives, CHSP 2DE/35.

such a measure "coupera la France en deux."[91] The Fifth Plan, published in 1966, integrated the backlash of eastern interests. European competition, it said, required accelerating development efforts in the nation's most dynamic regions and the areas neighboring Europe's economic heartland. The prosperity of strong regions was the precondition for redistributing resources to poor ones.[92]

The national planning system that emerged between 1955 and 1964 was in large part a response to these regional antagonisms. It offered two potential solutions. First, central experts using rational development models and objective criteria would arbitrate between regional interests. Secondly, the concentration of resources on a limited number of "growth poles" and "axes" in each region could reconcile the principle of equality with the limits of public investments.[93] Both of these efforts to impose priorities got bogged down in territorial conflicts of interest. The regional development plans announced in 1955 were initially meant to be published by the end of the year; in reality, the last one was only issued a decade later, by which time the whole project had been boxed up as unworkable.[94] As a result, concrete progress on regional development concerned a splintered set of programs responding to political urgency and well connected pressure groups. Unruly farm populations justified the creation of the *sociétés d'aménagement régional* (SARs) in southern France, the Algerian war sparked the Constantine Plan of 1958, and it took a veritable social upheaval for Breton regionalists to finally extract funding for their 1953 regional program in 1961-1962.

The antagonisms created by such ad hoc priorities and the disappointment over slow progress elsewhere led to the ambitious reforms of 1963-1964. The government created an integrated national-regional planning system, which was supposed to coordinate all territorial programs and submit the geography of public spending to

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[91] Joseph Martray, *Vingt ans qui transformèrent la Bretagne: L'épopée du CELIB* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1983), 162-163, 169-171. See also Pierre Massé in Henri Rousso, *De Monnet à Massé: Enjeux politiques et objectifs économiques dans le cadre des quatre premiers Plans (1946-1965)* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1986), 207.

[92] Niles M. Hansen, *French Regional Planning* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), 209-213, 216, 219-220.

[93] Maurice Byé, "Les moyens d'une politique des économies régionales," in *Etude sur une politique des économies régionales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1957), 98-105. See also Byé, "Note sur les plans de développement régional," note of 17 February 1956, CES archives in CHAN CE/504.

[94] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 190-2; Roger Monier, *Région et économie régionale* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1965), 161-70.

rational criteria of economic development and social needs. Substantial administrative reforms—including the creation of the DATAR and planning regions with consultative assemblies—provided the administrative machinery for this task. But a more comprehensive system simply proved more contentious and unwieldy. Provincial politicians flooded the government with spending demands and then denounced central planners' attempts to impose choices as top-down technocracy. These state experts, meanwhile, found themselves largely unable to establish objective criteria to justify their priorities; in any case, they struggled to impose their choices on democratically elected politicians and ministerial services, which had little interest in complicated formulas for establishing geographic priorities. Within just a few years, the head of regional planning at the CGP, Pierre Viot, therefore called for a strategic retreat from the most comprehensive version of national planning and arbitrage.[95]

The DATAR had already drawn the same conclusion, shifting its focus to the second form of national planning: growth poles.[96] Working with a limited set of big city mayors in the *métropoles d'équilibre* was far more manageable than trying to please twenty-two regional assemblies. The metropolitan programs also corresponded better to the logic of competitiveness, both at the national and then international levels. They were intended first and foremost to rival Paris, for public as well as private investments: the DATAR rushed the creation of metropolitan planning agencies precisely to counteract the DRP's success at funneling state credits to the Paris region.[97] The regional capitals also competed with neighboring cities such as Frankfurt, Milan, and Barcelona.[98]

What the *métropoles* did not do, however, was alleviate the political problem of the local distribution of state spending. The representatives of cities not chosen for the new programs denounced the concentration of resources as a travesty to Republican equality; they also viewed the whole notion that economic growth and competitiveness

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[95] Viot to Montjoie, 31 July 1967, CAC 19920537/2. See also Serge Antoine, "La préparation du VIe Plan," in *Aménagement du territoire et développement régional* vol. 2 (Grenoble: 1968-1969); Pierre Bauchet, *La Planification française: Vingt ans d'expérience* (Éditions du Seuil, 1966), 86, 89.
[96] Viot to Montjoie, 31 July 1967, CAC 19920537/2; Pierre Grémion, *Le Pouvoir périphérique: Bureaucrates et notables dans le système politique français* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 433.
[97] "Rapport DATAR au gouvernement, confidentiel," September 1964, CAC 19930278/188; "Note sur certains problèmes d'aménagement du territoire," ca. early 1966, Michel Debré personal archives, CHSP 2DE/35.
[98] Merlin, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 180.

required giant metropolitan areas as a misguided principle. Urban realities seemed to prove them right. As with the Paris region, the 1968 census showed that the government had overestimated the growth rates of large provincial cities. Projects for each had been fantastic. The Paris region was planned to hold between 14 and 16 million residents (as opposed to less than 12 million currently); the metropolitan areas of Lyon and Marseille were supposed to shoot up from 1.5 and 1.15 million residents, respectively, to over 3 million each.[99] Both politically and economically, central planners had pushed metropolitanization further than it was ready to go. The DATAR announced eight *métropoles* in 1964, designated seven more regional capitals as growth poles just three years later, further expanded its list in 1971, and then shifted focus to smaller cities (*villes moyennes*) in 1973. Once again, the economic crisis reinforced this earlier trend, forcing the government to trim back its oversized urban projects.[100]

At the same time, the broader French system of regional development planning was being challenged on two different fronts. The first concerned the politicization of regionalism. The 1964 reforms, were based on the principle that regionalization was "functional"—a technical matter of economic planning and administrative coordination, not politics—and were designed by administration insiders without public consultation.[101] But the deliberate redistribution of power and resources regionalization entailed was nothing if not political. Within a matter of years, the conflicts created by the 1964 reforms raised calls on both the Left and the Right to make regionalism a matter of democratic oversight. Somewhat surprisingly, it was Charles de Gaulle who made the decisive move. The president was no regionalist, but he was determined to snuff out opposition to his regime from the traditional political class and to promote a new generation of socioeconomic elites, who presumably would be more favorable to state-led modernization. By 1966, he decided that strengthening the region and reforming the Senate were the twin means to this end.[102]

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[99] Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français en 1972* (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), 116, 129-130.
[100] Merlin, *L'Aménagement du territoire*, 187-190; Clout, "France," 122.
[101] Catherine Grémion, *Profession, décideurs: Pouvoir des hauts fonctionnaires et réforme de l'État* (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1979).
[102] Romain Pasquier, *Le Pouvoir régional: Mobilisations, décentralisation et gouvernance en France* (Paris: Presses de Sciences-Po, forthcoming), 113-114; Catherine Grémion, "Le général de Gaulle, la régionalisation et l'aménagement du territoire," in *De Gaulle en son siècle, Tome III: Moderniser la France* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1992); Patrice Duran, "Élites et régionalisation. Une régionalisation

May 1968 pushed this project forward. The social upheaval convinced de Gaulle of the need to reform France's democracy by giving the public greater participation in government. And when the conservative reaction to unrest gave the Gaullists a major victory in the June 1968 elections, the president had the political opening he needed for reform. In April 1969, de Gaulle staked his presidency on a referendum that asked citizens to approve the transformation of the Senate and the region in a single vote. The first aspect was the most controversial. De Gaulle proposed gutting the Senate of its political power, by reducing it to a consultative role and mixing civil society representatives with elected officials; a broad swathe of French politicians mobilized to defeat this attack on suffrage as the source of political legitimacy. The president's regional project raised similar issues. By creating a regional government—with a political assembly and its own budget, albeit with modest means and a prefect as its executive—it sought to outmaneuver the local political class, and its assembly likewise mixed elected officials and socioeconomic representatives. But the question of the public and political support for regionalization was confused by the Senate reform. The referendum was defeated and de Gaulle left office.[103]

The 1969 referendum achieved one of its goals: launching a political debate on the role of regions in France. On the other hand, the president's spectacular defeat precluded any further attempts at vigorous reforms of territorial governance. The debates opened up in the 1960s continued in the 1970s, but with no political rudder. In 1972, the CGP made a first piecemeal devolution of decision-making and financial responsibilities to regional politicians and prefects—the basic shift demanded by Viot in 1967—and the economic crisis forced it to abandon its most exhaustive planning efforts in 1976. Nonetheless, the complex, technocratic regional system created in 1964 survived until the Left victory in 1981 opened the way to a political reform.[104]

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ambiguë pour des élites introuvables," in *Le Général de Gaulle et les élites*, ed. Serge Berstein, Pierre Birnbaum, and Jean-Pierre Rioux (Paris: La Découverte, 2008), 179.

[103] Pasquier, *Le Pouvoir régional*, 114-116; Duran, "Élites et régionalisation," 179-180, 188-193.

[104] On the shifts from the 1960s to the early 1980s, see Laborie, Roo, and Langumier, *La Politique française d'aménagement du territoire*, 113-118; Essig, *DATAR*, 108-121; Pasquier, *Le Pouvoir régional*, 116-121. Regional planning has remained an important aspect between national, regional, and local governments in France. Romain Pasquier, *La Capacité politique des régions: Une comparaison France/Espagne* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 99-110.

The second challenge to the regional development principles of 1955 came from the ever more aggressive attacks on the wisdom of regional redistribution in an era of European competition. The Sixth Plan, published in 1970, became a discursive battleground on this front. Business leaders and top government administrators inserted a critique of equalizing principles into the program's first draft. It took a concerted mobilization by the stakeholders of *aménagement du territoire*—and ultimately the personal intervention of the prime minister—to remove such notions from the final version of the document.[105] The next year, the DATAR published a sensational report in defense of regional redistribution. The *Scénario de l'inacceptable* was an exercise in futurist studies, or *prospective territoriale*, which predicted that trade liberalization and the rise of multinational corporations would aggravate uneven development to catastrophic proportions if the state did not accelerate efforts to develop peripheral regions.[106]

On the eve of the economic crisis, then, the issue of equalizing production divided the planning community as never before. Economic integration and international competition provided arguments for projects to redistribute investments and to concentrate them on dynamic territories; national arbitrage and polarized growth promised to reconcile these conflicting logics, but struggled to do so in practice. The 1974 downturn fundamentally altered the context of debates, but for nearly a decade no clear answer emerged to the tension between spatial Keynesianism and the promotion of competitiveness. Massive reconversion programs for hard-hit sectors, such as steel and shipbuilding, mixed with government support for the international expansion of France's most competitive industries and new efforts at "endogenous" development. The Left government elected in 1981 initially took *dirigiste* Keynesianism to its zenith, before rapidly retreating to a market-oriented stance and pushing most responsibilities for local

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[105] Lajugie, Lacour, and Delfaud, *Espace régional et aménagement du territoire*, 288-292.

[106] François Essig called this polarization "un accroissement spectaculaire de déséquilibres régionaux engendrant des risques de tensions, voire de conflits au sein de la société française." Essig, *DATAR*, 45-47. An abbreviated version of the "Scénario" can be found in Christel Alvergne and Pierre Musso, *Les Grands textes de l'aménagement du territoire et de la décentralisation* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2003). On *prospective territoriale*, see Régis Boulat, "Le Groupe 1985 et les origines de la prospective territoriale," in *Aménageurs, territoires et entreprises en Europe du Nord-Ouest au second XXe siècle*, ed. Olivier Dard and Jean-François Eck (Metz: Centre régional universitaire lorrain d'histoire, 2010).

job creation off to cities, departments, and regions in the framework of decentralization reforms.[107]

The erosion of blue-collar work and of the state's capacity to distribute private sector jobs have intensified territorial disparities in industrialization rates during recent decades. Just as important as the increased inequality of production, however, has been a continued equalization of population, wealth, and well-being among most French regions. This paradox is explained by the existence of two redistributive mechanisms, which unintentionally spread resources from France's most competitive urban regions to the rest of the national territory: public spending and the "residential economy" of tourism, secondary residencies, and the migration of retired persons. State and residential spending are particularly powerful in the Hexagon, and both have continued to grow in importance in recent decades. As a result, local fortunes are no longer as closely tied to the geography of production as they were in the middle of the twentieth century.[108]

The postwar faith in equalizing industry thus has an ambiguous relationship to contemporary France. On the one hand, the unintentional redistribution of wealth contains a number of attractive features compared to postwar regional policies. First of all, public spending provides less competitive territories with far more resources than targeted development aid, which remained modest at best. This safety net dampens the pressure on many localities to compete for investments. In effect, with major urban regions like Paris and Lyon on the front lines of global competition, the impact of economic instability is softened for smaller towns and rural areas. It is certainly hard to mourn the worst aspects of postwar efforts to pin local fortunes on attracting production: the generalized frenzy among municipalities to chase smokestacks and their packaging of local residents as so much cheap labor for outside investors.

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[107] Laborie, Roo, and Langumier, *La Politique française d'aménagement du territoire*, 84-88; Le Galès, *Politique urbaine et développement local*, for a brief summary of the shift to new local development policies see 77-87. This experimentation with a range of alternatives to spatial Keynesianism was found across Western European. Neil Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 163.

[108] The economist Laurent Davies discovered this split between production and wealth. Laurent Davezies, *La République et ses territoires: La circulation invisible des richesses* (Paris: Seuil, 2008), 5-12, 90. On such "automatic stabilizers" more generally, see Brenner, *New State Spaces*, 136, 145-146; Patrick Le Galès, *Le Retour des villes en Europe* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2003), 162-169.

Secondly, the postwar principle of territorial equality was fundamentally problematic. Politicians abused it in an effort to maximize patronage. Conflating social justice and territorial balance reified regions in ways that were often politically divisive and socially harmful. The principle of equality legitimated vicious attacks on Paris and its people, leaders imposed divisive provincial projects in the name of spreading development, and *aménagement du territoire* led to a heated competition for state programs. As in so many other realms, Jean-François Gravier offered a caricature of this prioritization of places over people, demanding the forced decentralization of population and resources in an imperialist effort to occupy the entire national territory. Distributing public spending according to social needs rather than the ideal of territorial balance can avoid such spatial fetishism. And by spreading wealth "silently," automatic redistributors alleviate the territorial antagonisms created by explicit regional policies.[109]

On the other hand, postwar regional policies opened the way to a number of progressive projects and have continued relevance to contemporary France. To begin with, the silent redistribution of contemporary France owes a great deal to the loud debates about territorial disparities between the 1940s and the 1960s. *Aménagement du territoire* established durable provincial industries, made many cities better places to live and work, developed the tourist potential of peripheral regions, and corrected inequalities in state spending. In addition, the principle of regional equalization often motivated a search for pragmatic solutions to social and economic dilemmas—a fact hidden by focusing on its more abstract and abusive applications. Factory layoffs drove job creation efforts, labor unions demanded an end to the low-wage economy, and government modernizers sought to break down the geographic barriers to rapid growth.

Finally, the choice between redistributing investments and accepting uneven development raises some of the same basic tensions today as it did a half-century ago. Many postwar leaders viewed the concentration of growth around dynamic territories as an inherent part of expansion, considered geographic imbalance a marginal issue, and feared that equalizing efforts would simply disperse public resources in unproductive communities. Yet the same concern for expansion and competitiveness also became arguments for redistribution. In the mid-1950s, a broad range of policymakers believed

[109] Davezies, *La République et ses territoires*, 92-94, 108-109.

that the divergent fortunes of towns and regions trapped resources in declining communities and generated resentment among people who—seeing local economies falter and jobs leave—begrudged dynamic urban regions, international integration, and state efforts to raise productivity. In this context, government support for regional development and renewed job creation could promote flexibility in an international economy while at the same time responding to demands for social justice and combating the most divisive national politics. For two decades, this principle opened unprecedented possibilities for stabilizing and equalizing projects amidst the tremendous geographic restructuring of postwar France.

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21 aménagement du territoire, correspondence with Debré
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IVRY 16 CNOE
RAP 185 Commission des économies régionales

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CE 504 Regional policy
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19771521/84	DIME (Direction Industries Métallurgiques, Mécaniques, Electriques) correspondence with MRU 1950-54
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19771530/45-47	DIME, industrial decentralization and Fourth Plan
19780695/8, 13	papers of Bellier, Director of DIME: aménagement du territoire 1953-54, propositions for June 1955 decrees
19830589/5	DIME, meetings with MRU and industrial decentralization, 1942-1950s
19900583/5, 9	Renault and Citroën industrial decentralization
19900592/8, 12, 14	RNUR industrial decentralization 1945-51, SIMCA industrial decentralization 1954-70, Fifth Plan Auto commission
19910817/7, 12	DIME, communications with the DATAR on industrial decentralization, Citroën implantations in provinces

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19770176/1	various studies and documents: Renault 1950; industrial decentralization ca. 1960
19770705/18-19	aménagement regional: papers of Ms. Loiseau
19770775/1-2	Papers of André Trintignac, chef de bureau à la Direction de l'aménagement du territoire (DADT), 1946-1963
19770777/1-6	Délégation générale à l'Équipement national (DGEN), 1942-1944
19770779/1-5, 8, 15, 34	FNAT: minutes of meetings, 1957-62; notes; annual reports; Rennes industrial park
19770783/1	“naissance de l’aménagement du territoire,” 1950-52
19770784/2	SARP correspondence with DADT, 1956-58
19770788/1, 7-10	Jean Faucheux papers, 1944-1963
19770814/1-3, 5	Comité interministeriel de la Région parisienne (CIRP)
19770815/4-5	Cabinet papers on aménagement du territoire, 1959-61
19770817/11-12	Conseil supérieur de la Construction, minutes of CNU-SAT and HCAT 1951-56
19770817/11-12	CNU-SAT and HCAT meetings on FNAT; CARP correspondence and notes, 1943-56
19770818/1-10	Conseil supérieur de la Construction, minutes, notes, reports, final plan
19770911	SARP and CARP: 21-24: minutes; 27: CCURP, minutes, conference des services and notes, 1955-62; 51-55: Aménagement industriel de la Région parisienne, including Renault and SIMCA

19780637/26	FNAT: Rennes industrial park
19790540/1	industrial location, 1944-1945
19900616/15-18	documents on various industrial sites, documentation, 1945-1961

Regional planning: CGP, CIAT, CNAT, CNOE, CIOE, DATAR, CCURP

19840649/5	CIAT, minutes of 1966-1970
19860219/1-26	CIAT, minutes of 1964-1976
19860308/1	DATAR, correspondence, 1963
19870451/34	industrial decentralization, 1965-71: revision aid regime; DATAR and CIAT notes to government
19890575	Regionalization of the Sixth Plan: CNAT minutes and notes 1968-1970, 45; CNAT notes, including industrial development, 46; CNAT minutes and notes 1970-1973, 178; CNAT notes, including industrial development, 179.
19920405/1	CCURP, 1956-58
19920576/1-17	CIAT, minutes of 1964-1973
19930275	Fourth Plan. National Assembly, Senate, and CES debates: 9, 12-14; regionalization of the budget for 1963-1967, 95-99
19930276/1-2	Pierre Massé papers
19930277	Fifth Plan. CGP note on regionalization, 1; National Assembly, Senate, and CES debates: 13-14, 24-25; regionalization of transformation industries, 124
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19840649	dossiers de Paul Mingasson, chargé de mission à la DATAR: deindustrialization in Seine-Saint-Denis, 4; *agrément* reform, 12

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19840335/51, 59	Ministry of Agriculture supervision of the SOMIVAC
19770143/2, 5, 26, 30	Interior Ministry on secteurs pilotes d'aménagement rural (SPAR)

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Cabinet archives

1A/124, 224, 229, 268	industrial decentralization subsidies: reforms, 1969-1975
1A/208	“Eléments pour la politique d’aménagement du territoire,” 1969
1A/215	industrial decentralization subsidies: Citroën dossier, 1967-70

1A/390-392	cabinet of Edgar Faure, minister, economic expansion program, 1954
1A/97	cabinets of Michel Debré and François-Xavier Ortoli, ministers, regional development, 1966-69
2A/16, 14, 21, 22, 25, 30	industrial decentralization subsidies: reforms, 1968-1973
5A/2	cabinet of Pierre Pflimlin, minister, documents, notes on underdeveloped regions, 1953-1955

IGF reports

2403	Auboyneau, "Problèmes de développement régional," 1960
2404	Hedde, "Rapport d'ensemble sur le développement économique régional," 1961; Hedde, "Note sur les conditions d'une organisation rationnelle de l'expansion régionale," 31 January 1962

Investments Commission (Commission des investissements)

B42269	Commission des investissements, minutes of 1951-55
B33510	creation of investments program for 1953

Employment Committee (Comité de l'emploi)

B16125	minutes and notes, 1953-1954

Inspection générale de l'économie nationale (IGEN)

B16107, -12, -27	CIOE, CNOE; Fonds de reconversion
B16128	SODIC, reconversion zones (*zones spéciales de conversion*)
B16129	subsidies to industry, 1961
B16130	June 1955 decrees, priority zones (*zones critiques*)
B16131	notes on industrial decentralization funding
B16174-5	Industrial Modernization Committee (Comité d'adaptation de l'industrie), FDES Committee 9, minutes and notes, 1954-59
B16195	FDES Committee 9, notes on industrial decentralization funding
B16207	notes on regional expansion; Regional Plans Committee (Comité des plans régionaux) on classing priority zones (*zones critiques*)
B16208	provincial development committees (comités d'expansion)
B16210	regional development, documents
B16212	notes on industrial decentralization for CES, 1957
B16349-55	Brittany regional development, 1959-1961
B45774	industrial decentralization, programmes d'action régionale
B45775	economic development ("Expansion économique, mise en œuvre")

Centre d'archives d'Outre-Mer (CAOM), Aix-en-Provence

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134	minutes, reports

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1076W58	BEI, 1958-61

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289	tracts, 1961-64
337	union section, Citroën, ca 1965-71
338	tracts, 1965-67, 1972
339	1965 elections, *Livre noir du trust Citroën*, correspondence with Paris on union strategy
379	CGT-Citroën bulletin *Unité ouvrière*, 1961-64

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390	UL congresses, commission administrative 1950-54; UL activities, 1955-60
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407	UD secretariat, minutes and correspondence, 1960-69
429	UL minutes 1953, 1960-65; correspondence including on post-1965 election repression at Citroën

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99W/282-284	tax exonerations, including for Citroën
99W/287-288	subsidies for industrial decentralization
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139W/124	Citroën, surveillance, 1964-66
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1169W/1	Departmental Direction of Labor, on Citroën
1488W/4-5, 118-129	Labor Inspection, on Citroën

Archives municipales de Rennes (AMR)

Henri Fréville cabinet

31W95	Citroën's arrival: housing and infrastructure
31W97	correspondence with Chamber of Commerce, CELIB

CELIB archives

1078W25-28	Commission régionale d'expansion économique (CREE) and CELIB Comité directeur: minutes, notes, and reports on industrialization

Joseph Cussonneau personal archives

Unclassified union tracts and union press:
CGT tracts, *Unité ouvrière*, *Notre Lutte*
CFTC/CFDT tracts
SISC/CFT tracts, *L'Indépendant chevronné*

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Notes and meetings on Citroën
ACO and union tracts
Press

Citroën papers, Centre d'archives Peugeot PSA, Hérimoncourt

Minutes of the Board of directors, 1934-1976
General assemblies, 1950-1971
Exercise reports, 1958-74

Archives départementales du Morbihan (Vannes)

955W/26, 47, 100	Mauron, zone spéciale d'action rurale
943W/518-519	Mauron, zone spéciale d'action rurale

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1180W	CNARBRL papers, provisional classification, B5, 7, 8, 10, 17, 18; AV, 0-2, Eaf 0-I

Archives départementales de l'Aude (Carcassonne)

1447w115	Prefecture on CNARBRL

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Confédération française démocratique du travail (CFDT) archives, Paris

1B43	Executive board and Secretariat FMA, 1952-54
1B45	Executive board FMA, 1960-65
1B46	Executive board FMA, May 1968 and its aftermath
1B48	Commission exécutive and Secretariat FMA, 1956-57 and 1961-65
1B49	minutes of Secretariat Métal, 1964
1B416	"Opération Citroën pour la défense des libertés syndicales," 1966
1B402	minutes of 1956-1957, 1967-74, help for unionization of Citroën 1968

Jean Saint-Geours papers, Bibliothèque historique Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Industrie (BHMF), Paris

6 = F	Gruson economic policy working group, 1954
12 = L	Pierre Mendès-France economy policy working group, 1954
8 = H	IGF and Treasury, 1950-55
17 = Q	photocopies of key Saint-Geours texts

Pierre Randet papers, Centre d'archives de l'Institut français d'architecture, Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (IFA), Paris

1	Secretariat aménagement du territoire 1962; Conseil supérieur de la Construction 1962
2	Regional organization, 1958-1966: Conseil supérieur de la Construction 1960-1962, maps for aménagement du territoire
3	Industrial decentralization and generalities, 1935-1969; decentralization of public services, 1955-1957; CNAT 1963-1964;
4	regional organization, Committee of Regional Planning, Regional Action Programs, copies of "Décentralisation et localisation industrielles," biannual DADT publication, 1955-1966
6	CNAT, 1963-1964; annual reports, DADT 1959-1963

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Économie 2	Ditto
Économie 4	Ditto, including aménagement du territoire and SIMCA

Centre d'histoire de Sciences Po (CHSP)

Simon Nora papers

Dossier 5	1954 economic program
Dossier 6, 6.1	housing and reconversion fund
Dossier 9	correspondence with Pierre Mendès-France on salary zones

Michel Debré papers

2DE: Prime Minister, 1959-1962

Miscellaneous notes in: 3, 12, 20, 29, 45, 46, 58, 36, 34, 52, 97, 59, 99, 100.

4 DE: Finance Minister, 1966-68

35	Regional development including industrial decentralization and regionalization of the budget, 1965-68

Jean-Marcel Jeanneney papers

15	Ministry of Industry: annual meetings of services, DEI and DIME
32	Ministry of Industry: press clippings on industrial decentralization

Centre de documentation contemporaine, Sciences Po (Paris)

France 506/0 (1-9)	Press dossier: "Économie régionale, aménagement du territoire en France de 1950 à 1970"
France 506/42 (1-3)	Press dossier: "Économie de la Bretagne, 1963-1971"

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