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# A Four-pages Saga
# An Attempt at Graphical Analysis of the Transformation of les Halles in the Late 20th Century, with Some Implications

**Daniele Campobenedetto**

Is it possible to represent exhaustively the design scales (Revel, 2006) of a thirty-years long urban transformation in just one scheme? Is it possible to consider such a thick description (Geertz, 1973) as autonomous and analytically useful?
The following scheme is an attempt to explore the answers at these questions through an overview of the Paris's les Halles saga during the Seventies and the Eighties, as a result of a three-year research
Even if the scheme may appear obscure to those who are not familiar with the les Halles saga it is meant to give an idea of the path traced by documents and material effects among different social entities, as policies, projects, conflicts and physical transformations. The arrows show the cause-effect relationship between events and mirror the continuous redefinition of strategic decisions, and the superposition of material effects. Almost every event has effects, which can shape the physical space (through building sites), the socio-technical space (through projects) and the social space (through negotiations and policies).
Exploring this path, is at least possible to highlight two elements:

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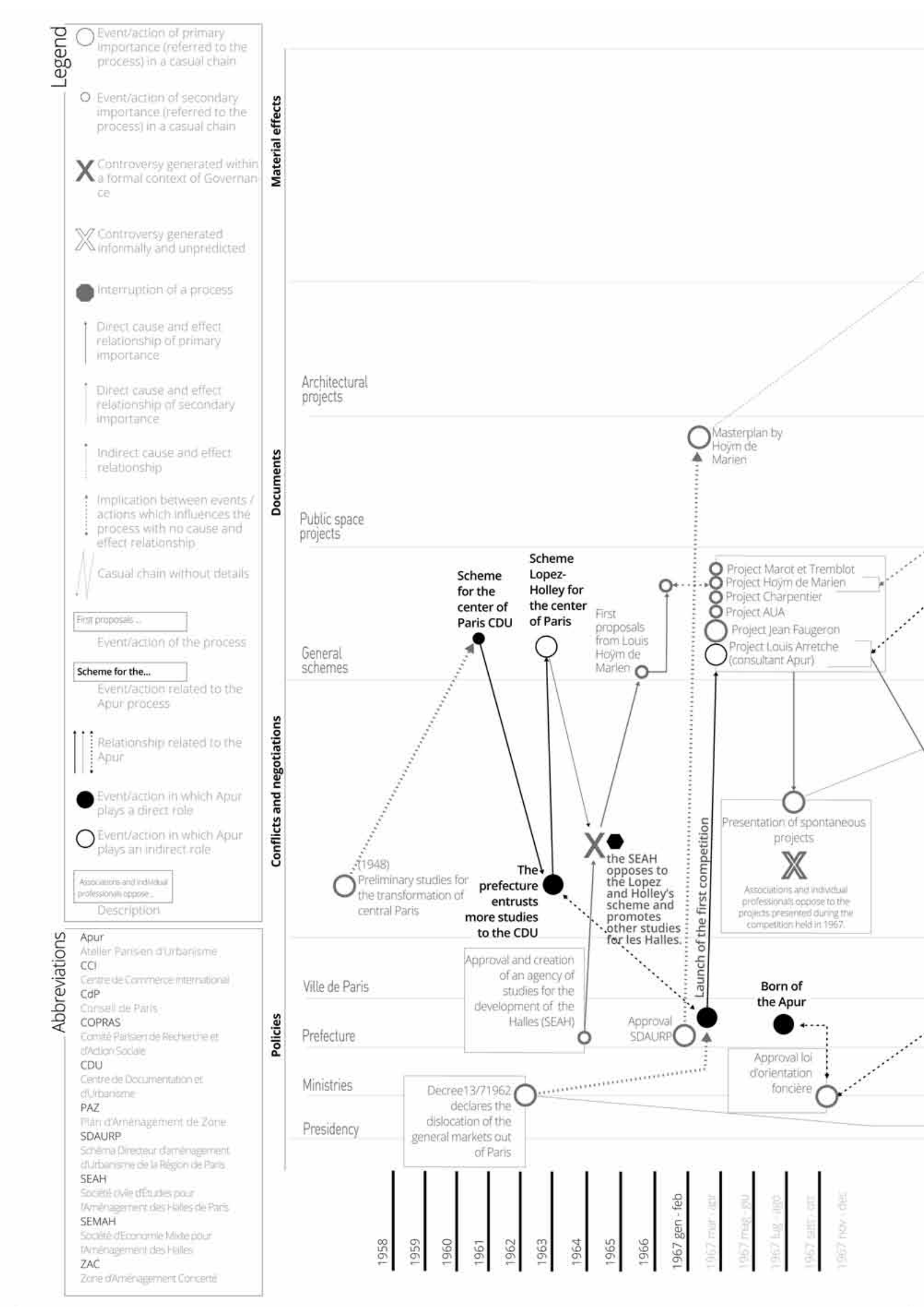
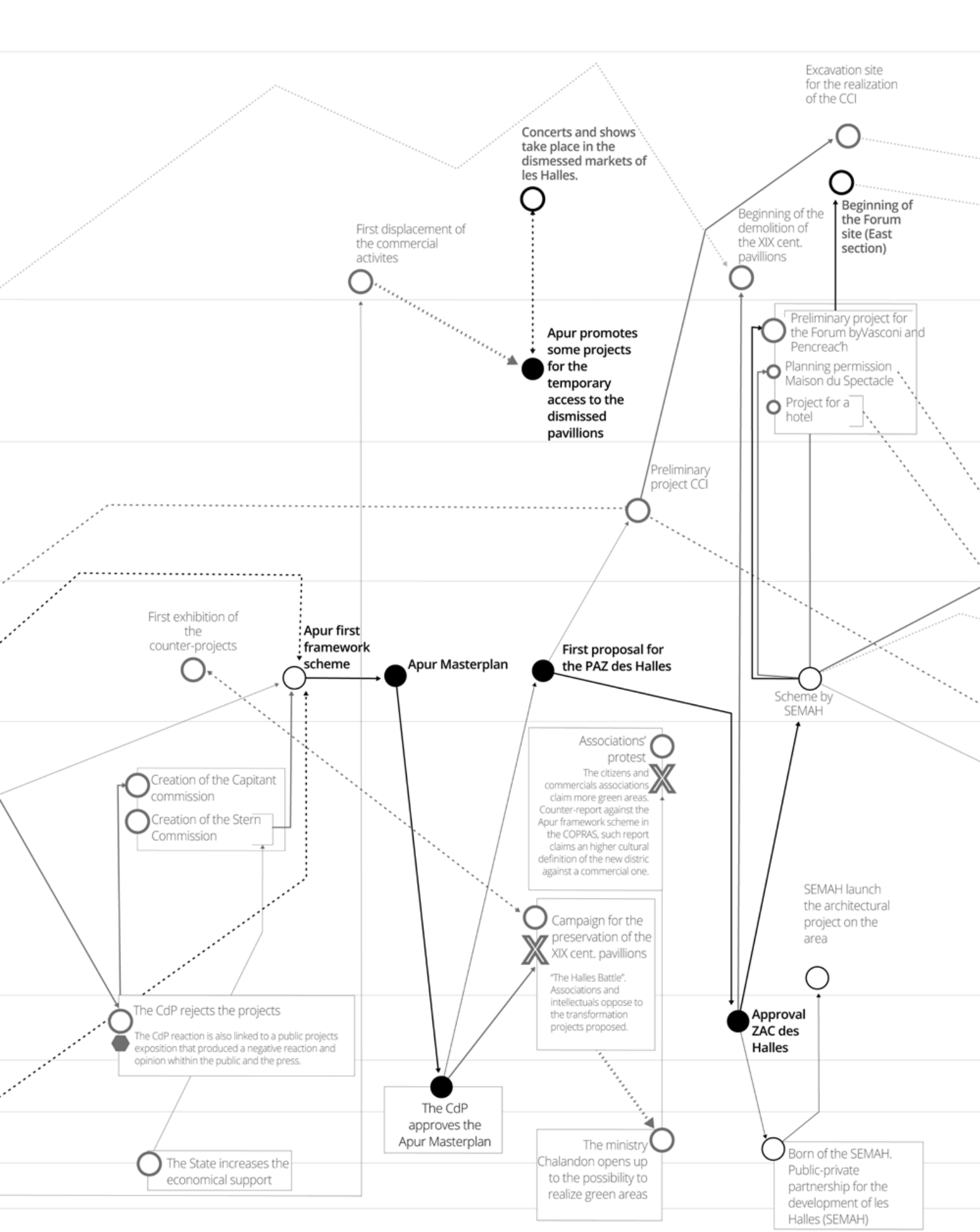
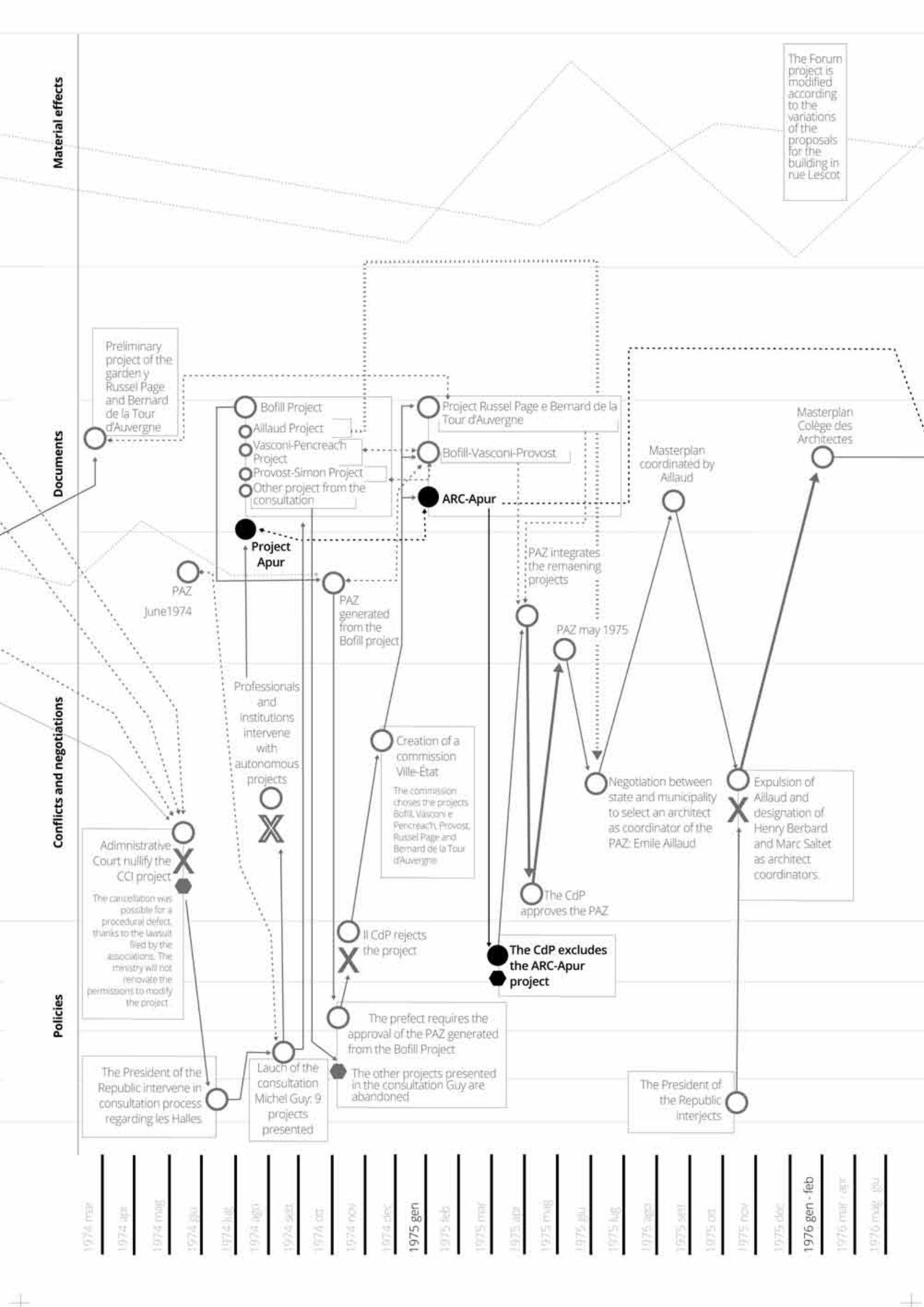
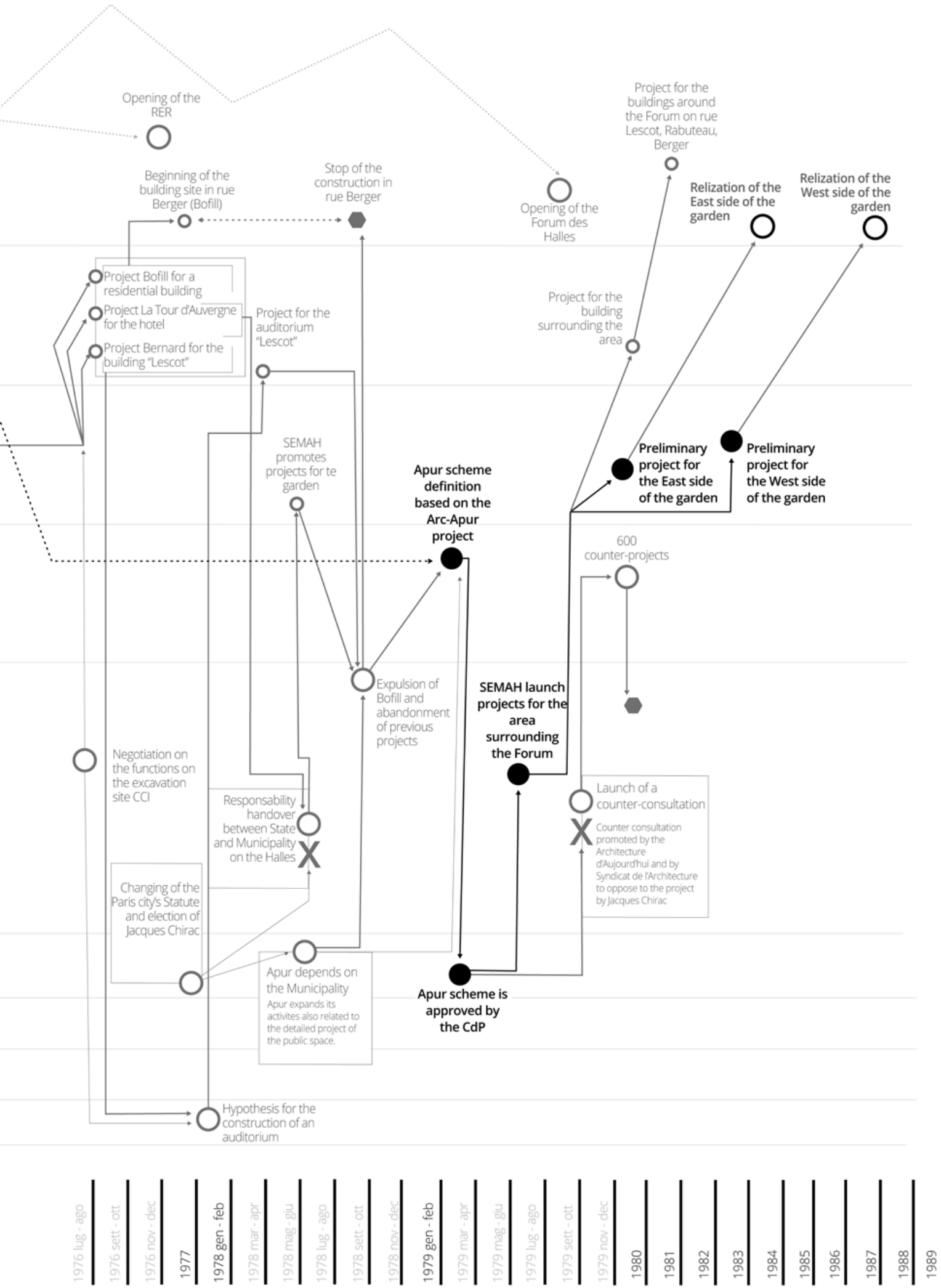

Legend
Event/action of primary importance (referred to the process) in a casual chain
Event/action of secondary importance (referred to the process) in a casual chain
Controversy generated within a formal context of Governance
Controversy generated informally and unpredicted
Interruption of a process
Direct cause and effect relationship of primary importance
Direct cause and effect relationship of secondary importance
Indirect cause and effect relationship
Implication between events / actions which influences the process with no cause and effect relationship
Casual chain without details
First proposals ...
Event/action of the process
Scheme for the...
Event/action related to the Apur process
Relationship related to the Apur
Event/action in which Apur plays a direct role
Event/action in which Apur plays an indirect role
Associations and individual professionals oppose ...
Description
Abbreviations
Apur
Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme
CCI
Centre de Commerce International
CdP
Conseil de Paris
COPRAS
Comité Parisien de Recherche et d'Action Sociale
CDU
Centre de Documentation et d'Urbanisme
PAZ
Plan d'Aménagement de Zone
SDAURP
Schéma Directeur d'aménagement d'urbanisme de la Région de Paris
SEAH
Société civile d'Études pour l'Aménagement des Halles de Paris
SEMAH
Société d'Economie Mixte pour l'Aménagement des Halles
ZAC
Zone d'Aménagement Concerté
Material effects
Documents
Conflicts and negotiations
Policies
Architectural projects
Public space projects
General schemes
Ville de Paris
Prefecture
Ministries
Presidency
Masterplan by Hoÿm de Marien
Scheme for the center of Paris CDU
Scheme Lopez-Holley for the center of Paris
First proposals from Louis Hoÿm de Marien
Project Marot et Tremblot
Project Hoÿm de Marien
Project Charpentier
Project AUA
Project Jean Faugeron
Project Louis Arretche (consultant Apur)
Presentation of spontaneous projects
Associations and individual professionals oppose to the projects presented during the competition held in 1967.
(1948) Preliminary studies for the transformation of central Paris
The prefecture entrusts more studies to the CDU
the SEAH opposes to the Lopez and Holley's scheme and promotes other studies for les Halles.
Approval and creation of an agency of studies for the development of the Halles (SEAH)
Launch of the first competition
Approval SDAURP
Born of the Apur
Approval loi d'orientation foncière
Decree13/71962 declares the dislocation of the general markets out of Paris
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967 gen - feb
1967 mar - apr
1967 mag - giu
1967 lug - ago
1967 set - ott
1967 nov - dec


Excavation site for the realization of the CCI
Concerts and shows take place in the dismessed markets of les Halles.
Beginning of the Forum site (East section)
First displacement of the commercial activites
Beginning of the demolition of the XIX cent. pavillions
Apur promotes some projects for the temporary access to the dismissed pavillions
Preliminary project for the Forum byVasconi and Pencreach
Planning permission Maison du Spectacle
Project for a hotel
Preliminary project CCI
First exhibition of the counter-projects
Apur first framework scheme
Apur Masterplan
First proposal for the PAZ des Halles
Scheme by SEMAH
Associations' protest
The citizens and commercials associations claim more green areas. Counter-report against the Apur framework scheme in the COPRAS, such report claims an higher cultural definition of the new distric against a commercial one.
Creation of the Capitant commission
Creation of the Stern Commission
Campaign for the preservation of the XIX cent. pavillions
"The Halles Battle". Associations and intellectuals oppose to the transformation projects proposed.
SEMAH launch the architectural project on the area
The CdP rejects the projects
The CdP reaction is also linked to a public projects exposition that produced a negative reaction and opinion whithin the public and the press.
Approval ZAC des Halles
The CdP approves the Apur Masterplan
The ministry Chalandon opens up to the possibility to realize green areas
The State increases the economical support
Born of the SEMAH. Public-private partnership for the development of les Halles (SEMAH)
1968 gen - feb
1968 mar - apr
1968 mag - giu
1968 lug - ago
1968 sett - ott
1968 nov - dec
1969 gen - feb
1969 mar - apr
1969 mag - giu
1969 lug - ago
1969 sett - ott
1969 nov - dec
1970 gen - feb
1970 mar - apr
1970 mag - giu
1970 lug - ago
1970 sett - ott
1970 nov - dec
1971
1972
1973
1974 gen
1974 feb


Material effects
Documents
Conflicts and negotiations
Policies
The Forum project is modified according to the variations of the proposals for the building in rue Lescot
Preliminary project of the garden y Russel Page and Bernard de la Tour d'Auvergne
Bofill Project
Aillaud Project
Vasconi-Pencreach Project
Provost-Simon Project
Other project from the consultation
Project Russel Page e Bernard de la Tour d'Auvergne
Bofill-Vasconi-Provost
ARC-Apur
Masterplan Colège des Architectes
Masterplan coordinated by Aillaud
Project Apur
PAZ integrates the remaening projects
PAZ
June1974
PAZ generated from the Bofill project
PAZ may 1975
Professionals and institutions intervene with autonomous projects
Creation of a commission Ville-État
The commission choses the projects Bofill, Vasconi e Pencreach, Provost, Russel Page and Bernard de la Tour d'Auvergne
Negotiation between state and municipality to select an architect as coordinator of the PAZ: Emile Aillaud
Expulsion of Aillaud and designation of Henry Berbard and Marc Saltet as architect coordinators.
Adimnistrative Court nullify the CCI project
The cancellation was possible for a procedural defect, thanks to the lawsuit filed by the associations. The ministry will not renovate the permissions to modify the project
The CdP approves the PAZ
Il CdP rejects the project
The CdP excludes the ARC-Apur project
The prefect requires the approval of the PAZ generated from the Bofill Project
The President of the Republic intervene in consultation process regarding les Halles
Lauch of the consultation Michel Guy: 9 projects presented
The other projects presented in the consultation Guy are abandoned
The President of the Republic interjects
1974 mar
1974 apr
1974 mag
1974 giu
1974 lug
1974 ago
1974 set
1974 ott
1974 nov
1974 dic
1975 gen
1975 feb
1975 mar
1975 apr
1975 mag
1975 giu
1975 lug
1975 ago
1975 set
1975 ott
1975 nov
1975 dic
1976 gen - feb
1976 mar - apr
1976 mag - giu


Opening of the RER
Project for the buildings around the Forum on rue Lescot, Rabuteau, Berger
Beginning of the building site in rue Berger (Bofill)
Stop of the construction in rue Berger
Opening of the Forum des Halles
Relization of the East side of the garden
Relization of the West side of the garden
Project Bofill for a residential building
Project La Tour d'Auvergne for the hotel
Project Bernard for the building "Lescot"
Project for the auditorium "Lescot"
Project for the building surrounding the area
SEMAH promotes projects for te garden
Preliminary project for the East side of the garden
Preliminary project for the West side of the garden
Apur scheme definition based on the Arc-Apur project
600 counter-projects
Expulsion of Bofill and abandonment of previous projects
SEMAH launch projects for the area surrounding the Forum
Negotiation on the functions on the excavation site CCI
Responsability handover between State and Municipality on the Halles
Launch of a counter-consultation
Counter consultation promoted by the Architecture d'Aujourd'hui and by Syndicat de l'Architecture to oppose to the project by Jacques Chirac
Changing of the Paris city's Statute and election of Jacques Chirac
Apur depends on the Municipality
Apur expands its activites also related to the detailed project of the public space.
Apur scheme is approved by the CdP
Hypothesis for the construction of an auditorium
1976 lug - ago
1976 sett - ott
1976 nov - dec
1977
1978 gen - feb
1978 mar - apr
1978 mag - giu
1978 lug - ago
1978 sett - ott
1978 nov - dec
1979 gen - feb
1979 mar - apr
1979 mag - giu
1979 lug - ago
1979 sett - ott
1979 nov - dec
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989

One is that les Halles saga is an over-stratified process, in which different urban paradigms overlap and superpose themselves going up and down between policies and material effects.
Another is the role of intermediate entities, as public bureaucracies (Myses 1944) – namely The Atelier Parisien d'Urbanisme (APUR) – which appears to be the translator of policies in plans and projects, through conflicts and negotiations.
The question if such a tool can be used not just to build up a rough "urban history" (Roncayolo 1976), but rather to picture an ongoing project, remains an open issue: the same energy which is more conventionally spent to communicate a design could, perhaps, be redeployed to design a process.

*References*

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