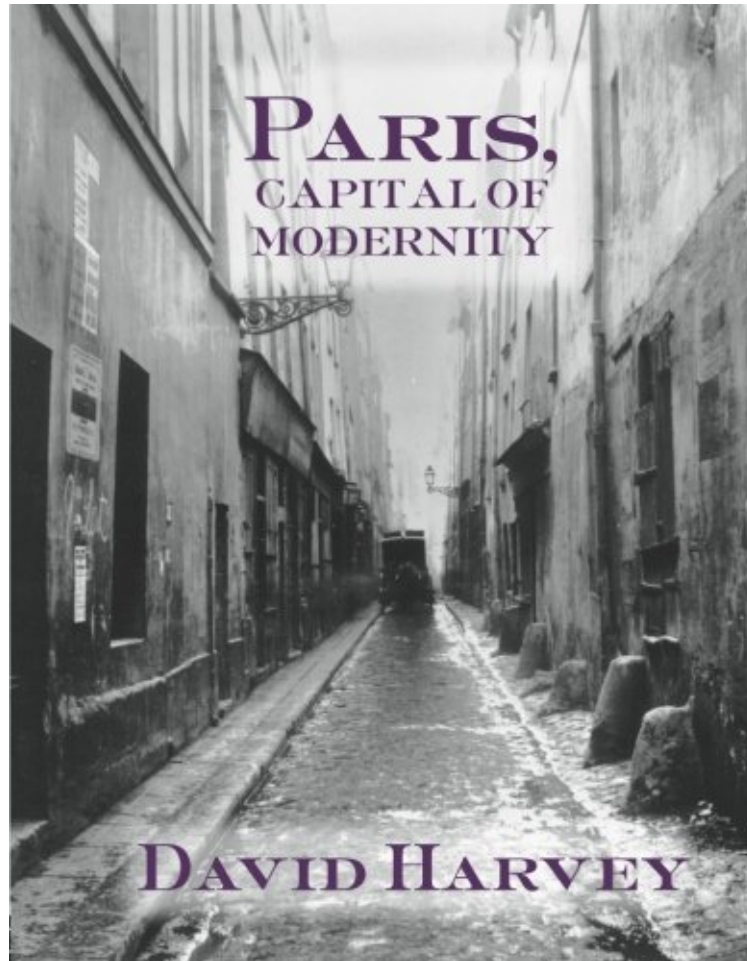


Paris, Capital of Modernity

David Harvey

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David Harvey : Paris, Capital of Modernity before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Paris, Capital of Modernity:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A cultural and geographical history of Second Empire ParisBy M. A. KrulDavid Harvey, the famous social geographer, is not particularly known for his work on cultural matters, having spent most of his career working on issues of political economy, spatial organization and (some) philosophy of the same. Nonetheless, "Paris, Capital of Modernity" is a partially cultural, partially political-geographical history of the modernization of Paris undertaken under the famous leadership of Georges Haussmann (1809-1891), who created the monument, park and boulevard systems for which Paris is now justly renowned. As context, Harvey analyzes the works and attitudes of famous writers of that period in Paris, such as Flaubert and De Balzac, in addition to providing many nice photographs and maps charting the changes and developments in France's capital.As one can expect with Harvey, most of the work is spent on tracing the geographical and spatial aspects of the modernization and

industrialization of Paris and its political background in the persons of Napoleon III, Emperor of France between 1852 and 1870, and Georges Haussmann. He shows the constellation of class forces that allowed Napoleon III to play various classes against each other, shifting support from financial capital to landlord powers and back, and the position Haussmann's developments had in this political ensemble. Although the initial material is a little dry, things get better as Harvey digs into the meat of the matter, where Haussmann does not appear as much as the hated enemy of the workers and wrecker of ancient Paris as he is often depicted, but rather as an embodiment of the 'creative destruction' that capitalism is when it fully comes into its own, as it did in France around this time. The tensions and furies caused by the combination of capitalist industrialization on the one hand, and the spatial and economic restructuring of Paris as such by Haussmann and speculators both would finally erupt into the Paris Commune of 1871, which inaugurated the permanent end of the power of both reaction and a bloody repression of socialism in France. The book is written with the usual subtlety, political understanding, and nuance of Harvey's best work. Whether the literary additions to the work are an improvement or a distraction perhaps depends on taste, all the more since the first chapter, entirely on De Balzac's oeuvre, is rather at variance with the topic of the rest of the work. But although the topic of Paris' furious ascent into modernity is not quite a new topic (addressed famously by Walter Benjamin, for example), Harvey's book is a worthy addition to Marx' own studies on the history of France: "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte" (The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte) and "The Civil War in France" (The Civil War in France: The Paris Commune).¹ of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Historic Capitalist Template for Urban Renewal By Paul F Tioxon David Harvey as a renowned scholar only adds to his contributions to understanding not only Paris and Modernity, but Urban Renewal as a creative phase of Capitalism, as it seeks out new spaces within preexisting cities to invest surplus capital, employ labor and grow the future capacity for capital flowing in and out of globally connected regions. It is not only an intellectual grasp demonstrated here, but a grasp using multiple points of reference. The book is carefully designed to display political cartoons, illustrations, early photos and fine artwork to show the story he is trying to tell. Additionally, you will find an enlightening use of literature, novels, poetry, as well references from scholarly histories, and contemporary writings to tell the story of the remaking of Old Paris into the City Of Light, the grandest spectacle of urban beauty. A more recent example of this story would be Edmund Bacon's herculean reinvention of Philadelphia or Robert Moses reshaping NYC to ready it for the post industrial American Century. Baron Haussmann was the planner and driving force behind the renewal and expansion of Paris into a great global urban center, who carried out his renewal during what is referred to as the 2nd Empire period of France. He secured the political patronage of Napoleon III. For nearly 2 decades from 1853-1870 and continuing on well until after he was dismissed from his power, Paris became a construction site. Demolition of the old Medieval narrow streets and alleys and construction of new boulevards and grand monuments and public spaces became the hallmark of modern cities around the world.⁰ of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By N. Serrano Excellent book for understanding the modern world. Should be required read for all undergraduates.

Collecting David Harvey's finest work on Paris during the second empire, Paris, Capital of Modernity offers brilliant insights ranging from the birth of consumerist spectacle on the Parisian boulevards, the creative visions of Balzac, Baudelaire and Zola, and the reactionary cultural politics of the bombastic Sacre Couer. The book is heavily illustrated and includes a number drawings, portraits and cartoons by Daumier, one of the greatest political caricaturists of the nineteenth century.

From Publishers Weekly Drawing on essays written over the last 30 years, Harvey brings one of the most fascinating and confounding periods of French-or for that matter, European-history into sharp relief. He asserts that two conceptions of modernity were nurtured in Paris in the years after the First Empire-one bourgeois, and the other founded on the idea of the "social republic" geared toward benefiting all classes of citizens. Harvey traces these conflicting movements over the decades leading up to the Revolution of 1848 and charts their reverberations through the final days of the Paris Commune. The book is richly illustrated with over a hundred period photographs and cartoons by Daumier and others, which serve to reinforce the notion of Paris as a city of contrasts in a period of profound change. And Harvey is as comfortable and adept at quoting pertinent passages from the romantic novelists as he is offering detailed economic analyses of real estate and labor market dynamics. By making use of primary sources from diverse disciplines, he offers a thorough examination of the period: he explores, for instance, the role of women and class strictures and the consequences of urban planning and public transportation. The worst that can be said of this exhaustive investigation into the complicated and turbulent era of the Second Empire is that Harvey presupposes an intermediate knowledge of many of the important actors and events. As he weaves the humanities, philosophy, economics and sociology into a detailed tapestry, the author leaves remedial explanations of Parisian and French social movements to the authors listed in a well-annotated bibliography. This is not a problem in and of itself, but readers expecting a breezy history of the "City of Lights" may find themselves overwhelmed by the complexity and depth of this book. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Harvey's work is notable for the sheer diversity of sources he draws on... A stunning book that will engage anyone with an interest in 19th century politics and

urbanism... a definitive work on the historical geography of Paris which shows tremendous insight, forceful arguments, and above all, an obvious passion.' - Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy 'Harvey brings one of the most fascinating and confounding periods of French - or for that, European - history into sharp relief.' Publishers Weekly 'Much more than a simple narrative... [a] complex and sophisticated work.' - Library Journal 'David Harvey is perhaps the most important urban scholar writing in the English language, and here he is at his best.' - Thomas Bender, author of *The Unfinished City: New York and the Metropolitan idea*"About the AuthorDavid Harvey is one of the world's leading critical intellectuals. He is the author of 10 books, many of which are classics. He now teaches at the CUNY Graduate Center and the London School of Economics, after many years teaching at Johns Hopkins and Oxford.