JOHN HORNE : WORLD WAR TWO, FRANCE AND THE HISTORIANS.

THEME TWO : RESISTANCE HISTORY : MYTHS, HAGIOGRAPHY, AND REALITY.

DOCUMENTS :

1/ The Gaullist myth

2/ The communist myth

3/ Histories of myth and memory

1) Henri Rousso. The Vichy Syndrome

2) Pieter Lagrou, The Legacy of Nazi Occupation

JOHN HORNE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1. History and myth.

1) The Gaullist myth.

'If, as they gradually extended their action, they gained support of the majority of the population, truly active Resisters were never more than a minority. Everything, at the outset, argued against joining them: the crushing defeat of France, the isolation and apparent weakness of Great Britain, the instincts of self-preservation, prudence and even reason; the established organizations and the highest authorities of the country had opted for ceasing the combat. Alone, a breath of madness seemed to inspire those who did not despair [of victory].

Along their long, hard road, these minorities, faced with problems they could not resolve or even forsee, and obliged to undertake everything at once while diposing of none of the necessary means for success, came to divisions between themselves. Sometimes, lively conflicts opposed them to each other.

Despite these conflicts, the largest national unity in the history of France was achieved in the Resistance. In disagreement over just about everything before the war, the Resisters were of one mind in fighting the occupier and Vichy, restoring France to its place as a great power, and carrying out wide reforms. Thus, there was no civil war; the period of disorder was short and localised; the repression was much less bloody than has often been said [...]

Internally, in gradually recreating national unanimity, the Resistance spared the country a civil war when the Liberation came. It assured the partial revival of the governing classes and provoked a change in the senior civil servants [...]

By cancelling the provisional defeat [of 1940], by giving France back its place among the great nations, by writing some of the finest pages of its military history, by prompting a renewal of the finest civic and patriotic virtues, by preparing vast reforms, the Resistance contributed much to the Liberation and to the renewal of the Patrie.'

Henri Michel, Histoire de la Résistance en France (1950; 7th ed., 1975), pp. 125-7.

2) The Communist myth.

'The determinant role of the working class in the Resistance has never been seriously questioned by by politicians and bourgeois ideologues. However, if they have clearly noted, and how could they have done otherwise, the massive participation of the proletariat in the national struggle and the fact that it counted almost no collaborators among its ranks, the way this role was carried out and the reasons for this historical phenomenon can only be analysed by Marxists.

Here are some elements of this analysis on the basis of the documentation provided by the rich collection of <Souvenirs> (Memoirs) on which 10 volumes provide much information on the Resistance [NB published by the Communist publishing house, the Editons Sociales]. It is reasonable to propose the idea that the working class played the leading role in the Resistance in France. Saying this is not to under-estimate the meritorious, clear-minded and heroic participation of many representatives of the middle classes and the bourgeoisie, including the participation of Gaullists and de Gaulle himself.

But the working class and the Communist militants who animated it on the one had conceived the idea of the national struggle as a mass struggle and on the other hand were the only ones with the means to ensure that the struggle was effectively a mass struggle. The other resistance movements gave themselves goals of [military] intelligence to help the Free French in London and then in Algiers, and the Allies, and also propaganda. In these domains their role was important [...]

The organisations and activists of the working class, communists, syndicalists, because they had a long experience of concrete mass struggle, were able very early on, and then without stopping, to establish the link between all the actions of the working class and the people, including economic action, and the national struggle [...]

How can one explain this role of the working class in the national Resistance? Not alone by a kind of class instinct that made it sensitive to oppression, which is true, but abouve all because the history of the working class movement in France in the pre-war years had prepared the way. One cannot emphasize strongly enough the decisive importance of the Popular Front and the policy of the Communist Party

2. History of myth and memory

3:1 Henry Rousso

HENRY ROUSSO

The Vichy Syndrome

History and Memory in France since 1944

Translated by Arthur Goldhammer

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England

which had conceived this policy as guiding the working class not only in resistance to exploitation but also towards and awareness and practical implementation of its historic mission: to assure the direction of the nation in assocation with the other popular elements [of society].'

G. Willard et al, De la guerre à la libération. La France de 1939 à 1945 (1972), pp, 75-9.

Introduction: The Neurosis

The idea for this book began with a discovery that could have been surprising only to the naive young scholar that I was. In the late 1970s I began research on the history of the Vichy regime, obviously still a subject of heated controversy. Nevertheless, in all innocence, I thought sufficient time had elapsed to allow me to wield my scalpel. But the corpse was still warm. It was too soon for the pathologist to begin an autopsy; what the case called for was a doctor qualified to treat the living, not the dead—perhaps even a psychoanalyst.

What surprised me most was not the passionate reactions—even among historians—to everything written about the "dark years" of the war but the *immediacy* of the period, its astonishing presentness, which at times rose to the level of obsession: witness the constant scandals, the endless invective and insult, the libel suits, and the many affairs that attracted the attention of all of France, such as the trial of Klaus Barbie and the arrest of Paul Touvier. The cultural sphere, moreover, was inundated by images of a troubled yet fascinating past, as during the period of reappraisal I shall call the "forties revival" (*la mode rétro*).

I sensed an urgent need for something more than the usual scholarly approach. Alongside the history of Vichy, another history took shape: the history of the *memory* of Vichy, of Vichy's remnants and fate *after* 1944 and to a date that is still impossible to determine.

Born ten years after the war, I belong to a generation that grew up in the rather burdensome shadow of remembrance and mimickry of May '68. For us there was no "founding event" to rally around, nothing comparable to the Occupation with its pro- and anti-Resistance commitments or the Algerian War or the feverish events of May. Moreover, we of the post-May generation witnessed repeated at-

tempts to overcome those old divisions, the most serious of which were those stemming from the 1940s. Forty years after the fact, many politicians and intellectuals, young as well as old, were still playing at "Phalanges de l'Ordre Noir" [Phalanxes of the Black Order, the title of a well-known comic strip by Christin and Bilal in which former Franco supporters engaged in fanciful battle with former republicans in the 1970s, some forty years after the end of the Spanish Civil War—trans.].

The Field of Memory

Thus subjective factors played a part in my choice of subject. For some years now, historians have been taking an increasing interest in "phenomena of memory." At first glance it would seem that history and memory are two clearly different ways of looking at the past. The difference has frequently been analyzed, most recently by Pierre Nora.[1] Memory is a living phenomenon, something in perpetual evolution, whereas history—as understood by historians—is a scholarly and theoretical reconstruction and as such is more apt to give rise to a substantial, durable body of knowledge. Memory is plural, moreover, in that distinct memories are generated by different social groups, political parties, churches, communities, language groups, and so on. Thus "collective memory" might seem to be a figment of the imagination, or at any rate little more than a misleading composite of disparate and heterogeneous memories. By contrast, history has a more universal, if not more ecumenical, purpose. For all that history may be controversial, it remains a fundamental instrument for the education of citizens. Memory at times lives on in a religious or sacred key; history is critical and secular. Memory is subject to repression, whereas nothing in principle lies outside the historian's territory.

Yet the distinction between history and memory is a characteristic trait of the twentieth century, first identified as such by Maurice Halbwachs, a disciple of Bergson, and exemplified by the evolution of contemporary historiography, whose goal is no longer legitimation but the advancement of knowledge. In the nineteenth century the difference was all but nonexistent, particularly in France. The function of history then, of what Nora has called "history as memory," was essentially to legitimate the nascent Third Republic and to forge a national feeling. Today no such confusion is possible: the disintegration of rural society and of the ancestral traditions it embodied, the proliferation of sources of information and, concomitantly, new approaches to social reality, the weakening of nationalist sentiment in Western Europe since World War II, and the depth of internal divisions including those born of Vichy—all these have caused history and memory to evolve in different directions:

> As "society" has taken the place of "the nation," legitimation based on the past and therefore on history has given way to legitimation based on the future. The past could only be understood and honored, and the nation could only be served; the future, however, must be prepared for. The three terms have regained their autonomy. No longer is the nation something to be fought for; it is a given. History has become a social science, and memory a purely private phenomenon. The "nation as memory" will have been the last incarnation of "history as memory."[2]

Thus a new field of study has been opened up for historians: the history of memory, that is, the study of the evolution of various social practices and, more specifically, of the form and content of social practices whose purpose or effect is the representation of the past and the perpetuation of its memory within a particular group or the society as a whole.

This history is rooted in what Nora and his colleagues have called *lieux de mémoire,* or mnemonic sites, embodying concrete traces of the past, visible and durable signs of its celebration. The history of memory can arise out of the memory of a particular group: the Camisards, for example, as studied by Philippe Joutard,[3] or combat veterans, as studied by Antoine Prost.[4] But it may also be associated with certain key events, whose memory survives long after the last flames have been extinguished and whose influence extends over the whole of society: examples include the French Revolution, of course,[5] the wars in the Vendée that grew out of it and have attracted renewed attention,[6] and World War II.[7] Historians are interested not only in ascertaining the facts about such events but also in comprehending their persistence.

It is no accident that these events were all associated with times of deep crisis for France's national unity and identity. These are the times

that have left the most lasting, most controversial, and most vivid memories—all the more so in that each new crisis has fed upon its predecessors: the Dreyfus Affair on the French Revolution, Vichy on the Dreyfus Affair, the Algerian War on Vichy, and so on. Memories of the past have themselves become components of the crisis, albeit at times of secondary importance.[8]

An "event-oriented" approach is useful in that it allows giving due weight to the tensions involved in any would-be collective representation of the past. Such tensions arise, first of all, among rival social groups, each jealous of its own reconstruction. An ex-POW will not share the same memories as a former partisan or a person deported to a concentration camp. There may also be tensions between such group memories and what might be called the "dominant memory," that is, a collective interpretation of the past that may even come to have official status; here, for example, I am thinking of Gaullist or Communist memory. There may also be tension between, on the one hand, the "voluntarist" memory that builds monuments, decorates graves, and buries heroes and, on the other hand, latent or implicit memory, subject to repression and therefore to slips, lapses, or silences—manifestations of the return of the repressed. For study reveals that, even at the social level, memory is a structuring of forgetfulness.

These same tensions also exist in the writing of history. Whether professional or amateur, the historian is always a product of his own time and place. He stands at a crossroads in the byways of collective memory: on the one hand he, like any other citizen, is influenced by the dominant memory, which may subconsciously suggest interpretations and areas of research; on the other hand, he himself is a "vector of memory" and a carrier of fundamental importance, in that the vision he proposes of the past may, after some delay, exert an influence on contemporary representations.

As a result, the history of the Revolution, Vichy, or the Algerian War cannot really be called universal. Now that history no longer has the purpose of forging a national identity, it has no therapeutic value, and in the short term, at least, it often has the effect of perpetuating old divisions, as a glance at the controversial nature of the so-called *guerre franco-française*, or Franco-French internal war, will show. And of those wars none has been more divisive than the war over Vichy.

Why Vichy?

Krzysztof Pomian writes that "when the time is right, an era of the past may serve as a screen on which new generations can project their contradictions, controversies, and conflicts in objectified form."[9] Something like this seems to have happened in the early 1970s with respect to memories of the Occupation. It has therefore been necessary to return to the source in order to locate those aspects of the event itself that were likely to survive the crisis and resurface once it had passed.

Why have memories of the Occupation (1940–1944) proved so enduring and controversial? The first reason is of course that the tragedy that France suffered in those years was one of unprecedented gravity. The country, already shaken by the events of the 1930s, was subjected within a few short years to a series of terrible blows. The war of 1939–40 was brief but disastrous: some 90,000 French soldiers died, and nearly two million French troops were taken prisoner. Crushing and unexpected military defeat led to a humiliating and ferocious occupation by foreign troops. Metropolitan France was divided into separate zones, and the Empire disintegrated as Vichy and de Gaulle vied for control of its component countries. Within France, civil war attained its peak in 1944 but continued after the Liberation in the form of the so-called *épuration*, or purge of those alleged to have collaborated with the Nazis. Finally, France rejoined the Allied war effort in 1944–45 as it also began to face the problems of economic, political, and moral reconstruction. Such well-known facts scarcely bear repeating except to emphasize that these wrenching events were squeezed into a period roughly equal to the term of a single legislature in peacetime; the French had no time to grasp, come to terms with, and mourn what had befallen them in one catastrophe before they found themselves caught up in yet another. It was under Vichy, and with Vichy, that people first began to take the measure of the defeat, and it was through the purge that the majority of Frenchmen became aware of what the Pétain regime had been.

Furthermore, the fall of France in 1940 undermined an imperial power, a state that appeared to rest on solid underpinnings. In the space of a few weeks, the country's institutions crumbled along with its military, political, and local elites. The normal channels of trade and distribution were suddenly cut off. Authority seemed to have

evaporated somewhere between Paris and Bordeaux: nothing of the kind had ever been seen in the history of a major modern state.

The very name given to the regime that succeeded the Third Republic and administered its coup de grâce focuses attention on this sudden power vacuum. For the new regime was called *l'Etat français*, or French State (as opposed to *la république française*), an appellation that has about it something of a magical incantation. The "state" allegedly created in a casino in Vichy on 10 July 1940 was precisely what was just then crumbling to pieces. *L'Etat français* was from the beginning a nonstate. Its program of internal reconstruction and modernization grew out of this vacuum. As has often been pointed out, the tragedy of Vichy lay in its belief that it could somehow fill the abyss that had suddenly opened up beneath the feet of the French in June 1940, and that it could do so under the watchful eyes of the occupying forces. The people of France, left to their own devices and to the Germans, buffeted between Pétain's reassuring words and the harsh realities of the Occupation, and subject to various authorities all of questionable legitimacy, would long remember the bitter taste of this collapse, much as they would have liked to forget it.

No doubt the crucial feature of the Vichy regime, however, was the large number of internal conflicts that erupted between 1940 and 1944, conflicts that make Vichy the very archetype of the *guerre franco-française*. Already in the 1930s there had been clashes over the nature of the dangers threatening France: some people, especially on the left, saw the principal danger as fascism and Nazism, even within France's own borders; others believed that the chief threat came from the Popular Front and the Communists. The only point these opposing views had in common was their emphasis on the "enemy within," particularly on the right. First the Munich crisis and then the armistice led to a solidification of these positions, although there were of course some who changed sides or views at the last minute. Eventually the line came to be clearly drawn between the Collaboration and the Resistance, groupings diverse in themselves though clearly differentiated.

But this major division masked others that sometimes ran deeper still. Old but never-effaced differences stemming from the Revolution and the Dreyfus Affair resurfaced during the Occupation: the battle against republican institutions, from the constitutional acts to various

clerical proposals made in 1940 and 1941, was a Vichyite obsession, even if the conflict was less bitter than it seemed at the time. Similarly, Vichy's antisemitism, which had concrete, official ramifications in law and justice, was inspired not by Nazism but by French antisemitic traditions.

At the same time, social antagonisms stemming from the events of 1936 erupted with violence. As is well known, the Vichy regime was in many respects—from the organization of production to the abortive Riom trials—a form of revenge against the Popular Front. Not all leading industrialists were collaborators, any more than all workers were members of the Resistance. Nevertheless, awareness of the gulf separating the two sides was sufficiently acute at the time that it gave rise, justifiably or not, to persistent hatreds.

So numerous were these internal divisions that it is not unreasonable to refer to them collectively as a civil war. To some the use of the term may seem shocking: in France there was nothing comparable to what took place in Spain in 1936 or in Greece during and after the war or in Yugoslavia, to say nothing of Germany and Italy. Yet France was a country steeped in a democratic and republican parliamentary tradition, and this was the first time since the Commune that its internecine struggles had taken on so murderous and radical a character.

The Vichy regime and the collaborationists were directly responsible for the imprisonment of 135,000 people, the internment of 70,000 suspects (including numerous political refugees from central Europe), and the dismissal of 35,000 civil servants.[10] As victims of exclusionary laws, 60,000 freemasons were investigated, 6,000 harassed, and 549 (of 989) died in the camps.[11] The French governmental apparatus, together with parties in the pay of the Germans, abetted the deportation of 76,000 French and foreign Jews, fewer than 3 percent of whom survived. They also worked to send 650,000 workers to Germany as conscript labor and waged unremitting battle against the Resistance and all other opponents of the regime. Admittedly, Vichy and the collaborationists were not directly responsible for all the executions, extortions, and deportations. Today, however, there can be no doubt that many victims of the era were claimed not by the foreign occupation or military conflict but by internal struggles in which Vichy figured as the initial issue: this is a fact, not an ideological prejudice.

It is also true that the struggle waged by Free French and resistance forces left bloody traces as well. Roughly 10,000 people were killed without trial or other legal authorization by the Provisional Government; a good half of these summary executions were carried out prior to 6 June 1944 (D-Day), thus *en pleine Occupation*. Of 160,287 cases examined by military and civilian courts, 45 percent ended in dismissal or acquittal, 25 percent in *dégradation nationale* (national dishonor) and loss of civil rights, and 24 percent in prison terms, a third of these being terms at hard labor for a limited period or for life. Finally, 7,037 people were sentenced to death, and perhaps 1500 were actually executed. In addition, the purge of the professions, while not equally thorough or equitable in all sectors of the economy, affected some 150 business executives and managers, some of considerable importance, as well as some 700 educators, to cite just these two figures.[12]

To this total must be added the thousands of deaths resulting from battles in western Africa and Syria between soldiers who remained loyal to Vichy and others who rallied to Free France. In sum, then, the fratricidal struggles of the Occupation were by no means a "cold" or merely "verbal" civil war but a civil war *tout court*, at least when seen within the context of French history. And civil wars have always been the hardest to deal with afterward, for in a foreign war the enemy goes home when hostilities end—in a civil war the "enemy" remains.

These factors stemming from the domestic situation in France were compounded by the general characteristics of World War II. To begin with, it was an ideological war, unlike World War I. In this sense, divisions within France largely overlapped worldwide divisions born of the confrontation between the century's three great political systems: fascism/Nazism, communism, and representative democracy, a confrontation whose echoes would continue to resound long after 8 May 1945 (V-E Day).

Second, the war produced profound upheavals everywhere, including France. The Blitzkrieg of 1940 and the bombings of 1943–1945 demonstrated the power of technology to a panicky population. Most people were obsessed with memories of the trench warfare and wholesale bloodletting of World War I and therefore failed to grasp the

significance of changes in the scale of warfare. But a few did, as General de Gaulle's appeal to the French nation on 18 June 1940 makes clear: "Devastated today by mechanical force, we will be able to conquer in the future by a superior mechanical force: therein hangs the fate of the world." Panic at the collapse of state and society was accompanied by a growing awareness that only a strong state could cope with serious difficulties ranging from economic crisis to war itself, deal with the new technologies, and above all ensure the security of its citizens: such was the inevitable corollary to be drawn from the disorders engendered by these profound changes. The American historian William H. McNeill has even gone so far as to suggest that the "welfare state" was a direct product of the "warfare state."[13]

Finally, after the Armenians, Manchurians, Germans, Russians, Spaniards, and Jews of Europe, the French during the war came face to face with the brutality of the twentieth century: mass terror, concentration camps, the systematic use of death as a political weapon.

But the ubiquitous state, technology, and organized violence are only one side of the coin; the other involves the globalization of trade, the unification of the marketplace, and the convergence of people's outlooks over a large portion of the planet. So it makes sense to claim that to a large extent it was World War II that gave birth to the world as we know it today. The birth occurred not only in pain but in alienation and division. And these circumstances, too, are part of the reason why the French (and others) have had such a difficult time coming to terms with this period of the past.

Why approach the problem by way of Vichy? Why not, for example, ask the same kinds of questions about the remembrance and memory of the Resistance? The Resistance and resistance fighters are of course present in these pages, but whole aspects of the story have been deliberately left out. Nor have I dealt with the Communist memory of the war (which would require more than one book) or with the memories of various groups having a special attachment to the period, a subject that has been studied by others.[14]

My working hypothesis is this: the civil war, and particularly the inception, influence, and acts of the Vichy regime, played an essential if not primary role in the difficulties that the people of France have faced in reconciling themselves to their history—a greater role than the foreign occupation, the war, and the defeat, all things that, though

they have not vanished from people's minds, are generally perceived through the prism of Vichy.

Rather like the unconscious in Freudian theory, what is known as collective memory exists first of all in its *manifestations,* in the various ways by which it reveals its presence. The Vichy syndrome consists of a diverse set of symptoms whereby the trauma of the Occupation, and particularly that trauma resulting from internal divisions within France, reveals itself in political, social, and cultural life. Since the end of the war, moreover, that trauma has been perpetuated and at times exacerbated.

A chronological ordering of these symptoms brings into focus a four-stage process of evolution. Between 1944 and 1954 France had to deal directly with the aftermath of civil war, purge, and amnesty. I call this the "mourning phase," whose contradictions had a considerable impact on what came afterward. From 1954 to 1971 the subject of Vichy became less controversial, except for occasional eruptions in the period 1958–1962. The French apparently had repressed memories of the civil war with the aid of what came to be a dominant myth: "resistancialism." This term, first coined after the Liberation by adversaries of the purge, is used here in a rather different sense. By resistancialism I mean, first, a process that sought to minimize the importance of the Vichy regime and its impact on French society, *including its most negative aspects;* second, the construction of an object of memory, the "Resistance," whose significance transcended by far the sum of its active parts (the small groups of guerrilla partisans who did the actual fighting) and whose existence was embodied chiefly in certain sites and groups, such as the Gaullists and Communists, associated with fully elaborated ideologies; and, third, the identification of this "Resistance" with the nation as a whole, a characteristic feature of the Gaullist version of the myth.

Between 1971 and 1974 this carefully constructed myth was shattered; the mirror was broken. This was the third phase of the process, which is analyzed here as a "return of the repressed." In turn this inaugurated a fourth phase, continuing to this day: a phase of obsession, characterized on the one hand by the reawakening of Jewish memory and, on the other, by the importance that reminiscences of the Occupation assumed in French political debate.

The first part of the book thus attempts to trace the contours of a "neurosis." What is borrowed from psychoanalysis is simply a metaphor, not an explanatory schema. No attempt is made to sort out different types of symptoms: an offhand remark by a French president is treated on the same level as the scandal triggered by a film or a notorious political trial. At this stage of the argument, all that matters is the patent topicality of a reference to the past, however insignificant it may be in itself.

In the second part, however, I attempt to establish a hierarchy of symptoms by investigating the vectors of the past, particularly those that played a decisive role in the history of the syndrome: commemorations, film, and historiography (including both historical research and teaching). I consider commemorations because of their apparent failure to construct an official memory of the past; film because visual images seem to have had a decisive impact on the formation of a common, if not a collective, memory; and historiography because historians and their books are a primary vector of memory.

Finally, after analyzing the vectors of memory and studying the formulation of the signs used to represent the past (or reveal its existence), I turn my attention to the recipients, to what might be called "diffuse memory" as opposed to the organized memory of groups and political parties and of scholarly re-creation. This is, indeed, the ultimate winner in the contest among representations because it cannot by itself formulate a coherent and operational vision of the past that is anything other than individual. The question here is: were French people of various ages and outlooks influenced by the representations offered to them?

Based on the idea that the past survives in an active form in the present and on the assumption that such survival can be studied historically, this book is intended to be open-ended. So I make no claim to have said the last word on the subject. And one final remark: I have tried within the limits of my power not to become a prisoner of the syndrome I am describing.

2

REPRESSIONS (1954–1971)

The year 1954 marked a turning point. France had only recently embarked on its first period of economic expansion unperturbed by worries about monetary instability. Growth had just begun to make its mark. Perhaps it was only now that the Occupation could begin to recede into the past. Previously, shortages and economic difficulties had prolonged memories of the lean wartime years just as effectively as the political aftermath had done. In 1952 Jean Dutourd had immortalized the alimentary humiliations of the dark years in his fictional diatribe against profiteering grocers, *Au Bon Beurre*.

Other hatreds and conflicts supplanted those of World War II. At Dien Bien Phu in May 1954, the defeat of French forces by the Viet Minh seriously undermined the tenuous reconstruction of the French army that began in 1941 in Africa, continued in France in 1944, and culminated in Germany in 1945, where the French contribution to the downfall of the Third Reich helped the nation forget the debacle of 1940. The inglorious end of the Indochina war and the beginning of yet another war in Algeria once again compromised "French grandeur."

The year 1954 also marked the high point in the career of Pierre Mendès France. Once again the nation had found a "providential leader," one who might justifiably claim to be carrying on the resistance legacy and the struggle against "neo-Vichyite" politicians whose renewed antisemitic attacks often were aimed personally at him. Yet Mendès, though profoundly marked by the war, led a generation that, while being a product of the Resistance, had little desire to rehash old quarrels. Later, to be sure, Mendesist intellectuals did found the Club Jean Moulin—named in honor not only of Moulin the Resistance leader but perhaps even more of Moulin the republican prefect—but

this was only after de Gaulle's assumption of power on 13 May 1958 and was intended as a warning against hypothetical "fascist" temptations. Under Mendès the CED issue was finally laid to rest, with all its echoes of Munich. Ultimately, the battle over the CED did not prevent Franco-German reconciliation, which proved easier to obtain than reconciliation within France.

The Oberg-Knochen Trial

One of the last great postwar trials also began in 1954: that of Karl Oberg, commander of the SS in France from 1942 and 1944, and his adjutant Helmut Knochen. These two men bore ultimate responsibility for the battle against the Resistance and for implementation of the Final Solution in France. The trial therefore should have been an event of major symbolic importance.

In retrospect, however, one is struck by the fact that the case of Klaus Barbie, brought to trial some thirty years after Oberg, aroused a much greater furor even before it went to court than did the relatively sedate Oberg case. Only a few years earlier, the last trials of French officials had stirred up more controversy than the Oberg affair. Yet the Oberg trial had revealed the scope of collaboration and repression under Vichy. René Bousquet, Vichy's chief of police, had been called as a witness and allowed to testify freely in his own defense.

As *Le Monde* correspondent Jean-Marc Théolleyre remarked at the time, much had been expected of this relatively rare testimony by a former Vichy official. Bousquet, a "young, elegant man looking quite trim in his gray suit, his face still tan from vacation sunshine,"[1] had been sentenced in 1949 to loss of his civil rights for a period of five years, this being the sentence automatically meted out to Vichy's ministers by the Haute Cour. He carefully delineated the scope of the agreements he had worked out with Oberg and Knochen between 2 and 4 July 1942 setting forth the terms of cooperation between the French police and the SS. (Among other things, these agreements had allowed the French police to arrest Jews in the summer of 1942, most notoriously in the so-called Vel d'Hiv roundup, named for the stadium in which Jewish detainees were held.) Caught up in the logic of his defense, Bousquet described these accords with the Germans as a

victory, much as others have claimed that the earlier Montoire accords amounted to a "diplomatic Verdun." The former Vichy minister even went so far as to exonerate the accused Nazis: "I owe it to the truth to say that on most issues, the General gave me what I wanted. On the others, Berlin did not allow him to go any further than he did."[2]

Oberg's French attorneys sought to defend their client by preparing a summary of Vichy's responsibilities in the enforcement of anti-Jewish laws and edicts, a summary that in many ways anticipated historical findings of the 1970s and 1980s. The facts, however, did not speak for themselves. The trial was not a suitable context for bringing to light the truth about the past. And the revelations were necessarily tainted, since the lawyers were bound, as defense attorneys, to insist that their clients were "honorable" men.

The Oberg-Knochen trial thus served as a screen, a salve for guilty consciences. On 9 October 1954 the military tribunal of Paris sentenced the two Nazis to death, but the death sentences were commuted by René Coty in 1958 and in 1962 General de Gaulle freed the two men after eighteen years in prison. This was much harsher punishment than was meted out to most collaborators, many of whom were freed before the end of the fifties; it was less severe than that of Adolf Eichmann, who was hanged in Jerusalem—also in 1962, the same year that Oberg and Kochen were released.

The Syndrome in the Chamber

Over the next few years the visible signs of the wartime legacy gradually vanished. Occasionally a figure with a dubious past would surface, reopening old wounds. In politics and intellectual life such cases were not uncommon, though few attracted much notoriety.

There was, for example, a stormy debate in the National Assembly on 18 April 1956. Jean Legendre, an Independent (right-wing) deputy from the Oise department, asked that the January election of Robert Hersant, a Mendesist Republican, be declared invalid. Legendre's case was based on Hersant's past, shady aspects of which were brought to light for the first time.

In August 1940, at the age of twenty, Hersant had founded a small political movement known as Jeune Front (Young Front), not unlike

other small political groups that sprang up in the early stages of the Occupation. In 1941 he became the director of a so-called Marshall Pétain Youth Center in Brévannes and later launched a newspaper known as *Jeunes Forces*. On several occasions he published articles in the collaborationist press.[3] In April 1945 he ran for municipal office in Paris but was indicted in June for acts harmful to state security and collaboration. He spent a month in jail and in 1947 was stripped of his civil rights for ten years for having briefly served as director of the Young Front; in 1952 his civil rights were restored under the terms of the amnesty.[4] Had he not become, in later years, a highly controversial figure and powerful press magnate, his past probably would not have created as much of a stir.

The attack on him in 1956 was a purely political maneuver. With his back to the wall, Hersant did a poor job of defending his record. To justify his role in establishing Pétainist youth centers, he alluded to the unemployment that had existed at the time and claimed that the centers had been run by officials of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC, or Christian Working Youth). This allegation incurred the wrath of another deputy, Fernand Bouxom: "The leaders of the JOC were being arrested at that time! There's a small difference there!" Hersant admitted his role in establishing Jeune Front but denied that it was a collaborationist movement. He also claimed that he had received a relatively light sentence in 1947, at a time when "judgments were particularly severe for those who had collaborated" (which was inaccurate, the trend having been toward lighter sentences). When Jean Legendre reminded him that the court in rendering judgment had alluded to alleged propaganda activities on behalf of the LVF, Hersant's reply was even more inept: "That is completely ridiculous. The alleged incidents occurred in 1942, and the LVF was only established two years later."[5]

But such details are not what make the case interesting. Branded a "collaborator," Hersant was denied his seat in the chamber by a vote of 125 to 11. The Communists, along with most Socialists and Radicals, abstained from voting, however. Most of the hostile votes came from the Poujadists, Independents, and segments of the MRP, while the eleven votes in favor came from Republican colleagues. In other words, elements of the right with the closest ties to Pétainism enjoyed the rare luxury of skewering a "collabo" in the ranks of the left. The

judgment was political, not moral. Jean Legendre, "stentorian spokesman for the [anti-Mendesist] sugarbeet growers," cared not a jot about Hersant's collaborationist past. It was the Mendesist he went after, just as he had previously gone after Mendès' interior minister, François Mitterrand, for allegedly leaking classified information in a case involving "anticommunist counterintelligence activities."[6] In any case, the invalidation of Hersant's election did not last long; he was reelected deputy for the Oise on 18 June 1956, and this time there was no protest.

The Hersant affair shows the mechanism underlying accusations of collaboration. The condemnation of the man's past had nothing to do with the acts he was alleged to have committed. In 1956 the attack on him was launched by the right. In the 1970s it would be renewed with even greater vigor by the left, partly because Hersant had by then become a powerful press baron and partly because people had become more attuned to the realities of the 1940s. In both cases, however, the attack was merely a ploy, a distortion of the past for tactical purposes.

The Syndrome in the Académie Française

On 20 April 1958 a scandal erupted in the Académie Française. Word that writer Paul Morand would seek election to that august body provoked a wave of indignation among those *immortels* who had been part of the Resistance. Here, at least, there was no ambiguity: Morand had joined the Nazi camp even before the fall of France.

In *France la doulce* (first published in 1934 and translated into German in 1939) Morand had denounced what he called, in veiled terms, the *pègre cosmopolite* (cosmopolitan underworld). After the invasion the German Propaganda Abteilung mentioned him, along with Jacques Chardonne and Robert Brasillach, as an exemplar of the "new French literature," whose attitude toward the occupying power was deemed "extremely positive."[7] A career diplomat, Morand served in 1943 as Vichy's ambassador to Rumania. In July 1944 he was named ambassador to Switzerland with the help of Jean Jardin and over the objections of the Swiss. He wrote for collaborationist papers such as *Combats*, the organ of the Milice, to which he contributed along with other well-known writers including Colette and Pierre

Mac Orlan.[8] At the Liberation he was removed from his post. In 1953, however, the Conseil d'Etat revoked this decision, and two years later he was readmitted to the diplomatic service. In *Le Flagellant de Séville* (1951) he described the occupation of Spain by Napoleon's army in terms that seemed to justify collaboration and to lampoon resistance.

Given this history, it may seem surprising that he would have attempted to gain entry to the Académie, but it should be borne in mind that this institution had been a bastion of respectable Pétainism since the Liberation. In 1944–45 it had been threatened with dissolution by General de Gaulle, who forced cancellation of its 1945 elections. Quite a few admirers of Pétain's National Revolution had once gathered under the cupola of the academy, and four of the most prominent of them had been forced out during the postwar purge: Charles Maurras, Pétain himself, Abel Bonnard, and Abel Hermant. Bonnard and Hermant were replaced in 1946 by Jules Romains and Etienne Gilson, but the other two seats were to remain vacant until after the deaths of Maurras and Pétain.

In 1958 only thirteen of the Académie's forty chairs were occupied by men elected prior to 1940, the year of the last pre-Occupation election; during the Occupation no elections had been held. Between 1944 and 1946 twenty-odd new members were elected, including quite a few writers and other prominent figures associated with, or reputed to have been associated with, the Resistance, among whom were Louis Pasteur Vallery-Radot, Jules Romains, and André Siegfried. Despite this wholesale change of personnel, however, the Pétainist clan remained quite powerful, not least on the several occasions when the influence of Pérain and Maurras had made itself felt. In 1953 former ambassador André François-Poncet was elected to Pétain's chair. It is customary for new members of the Académie to deliver a eulogy to their predecessors, and François-Poncet's speech was, for obvious reasons, anxiously awaited. The diplomat proved equal to the challenge, which he faced with not a little courage and considerable rhetorical skill: he expounded the view that Pétain had served as a "shield" for France and shifted all blame to Laval, while at the same time insisting on his admiration for de Gaulle (who was nevertheless greatly irritated by the shield metaphor): "Though I do not mistake the intentions of the man who wished to cover France

with a shield, I have often paid silent homage, as here in your presence I pay public homage, to the man who picked up the sword that had fallen from our hands."[9]

Traditionally the new member's eulogy is followed by another academician's response, and in this case the respondent was Pierre Benoit, who spoke on the theme of reconciliation, a favorite topic of the Pétainists: "My impression is that nothing is left for us to do but to congratulate ourselves for having done our best to bring about this union."[10] In the following year Robert Aron published his *Histoire de Vichy*, a book that develops even more fully the theme of the shield and the sword, a variation on the parable of the two strings.[11] In 1956 François-Poncet was again called upon to address the Académie, this time to welcome Jérôme Carcopino, who had served as minister of education under Vichy. On this occasion the ex-ambassador felt at liberty to ignore the more controversial aspects of the new member's career and to concentrate his praise on Carcopino's achievements as a student of Roman history.

For Paul Morand in 1958, however, equivocation was more difficult; the writer's past commitments could not simply be swept under the rug. It was not Morand the friend of Proust and Giraudoux who stood as a candidate for election, but Morand the man of Vichy, not to say the collaborator—a term that had been carefully avoided until then, except when François-Poncet used it to blacken the name of Laval. Morand's candidacy was taken as an act of political provocation. André Siegfried, who published an anonymous (but transparent) article in the *Revue française de science politique*, viewed it as such and named the man he believed to be behind it: Jacques de Lacretelle.[12] Along with ten of his colleagues, led by Mauriac and Romains, Siegfried signed a letter in the form of a petition from the "résistant" clan to François-Poncet, who was acting director of the academy for the current trimester:

> The undersigned members of the Académie Française do not question the candidate's literary credentials. But his name and his role during the last war remain associated with memories and grievances whose nature is such as to revive old controversies and conflicts better settled by the passage of time.[13]

They walked into a trap, one that had no doubt been carefully laid, for there was no way to exclude Morand without provoking precisely the kind of controversy that the petitioners had wished to avoid—Morand's past would have to be brought out and, with it, all the bad memories alluded to in the petition. Jules Romains, who was in the United States during the war, made a more sharply political case against Morand in *L'Aurore*. To elect Morand, he argued, would signify "the revenge of the Collaboration on a France that had first spurned the enemy and then driven it from French soil and on an intellectual elite that had preferred to incur the hostility of the government and to run the risks of resistance or exile rather than accept the favors of the occupying power."[14]

Jacques de Lacretelle took up Morand's defense, citing the testimony of Jews whom the writer had allegedly saved and using as a pretext the Conseil d'Etat's decision to reverse Morand's dismissal from the diplomatic service.[15] Interestingly, Lucien Rebatet rose to Morand's defense in *Rivarol* (8 May 1958): "This liberal, this unwavering 'good European,' at one glance took the measure of de Gaulle and his clique in London in 1940, returned to France, and agreed to represent French interests in a country enmeshed in battle with Stalin." The paper, however, took the position that the opposition to Morand was not really political at all but a settling of personal and literary scores led by Jules Romains, Georges Duhamel, and above all François Mauriac.

The Morand case clearly demonstrates the failure of the purge to establish a clear definition of the crimes and misdemeanors of collaboration. The Pétainists capitalized on this failure: why should Morand be excluded when he had not been found guilty of violating any law? The charge seemed to have merit because it was difficult to admit that the judicial system had not been equal to the task assigned to it.

The academy election of 22 May 1958 was thus an extremely tense occasion. In a clever stratagem, two elections were conducted simultaneously: one to fill the seat of Edouard Herriot, for which Jean Rostand was the favorite, and another to fill the seat of Claude Farrère, for which Paul Morand and Jacques Bardoux vied for the favors of the right. The deal was supposed to be that the right would give

the left Rostand in exchange for Morand, but this shrewd bargain went disastrously awry. Faced with outspoken hostility to its candidate, the Pétainist clan blocked the election of Rostand, who, like Morand, received only eighteen of the nineteen votes required to don the academician's sword. Furious, Pierre Benoit, organizer of the election, declared that he would never again set foot in the Académie. "He was never seen again," the duc de Castries laconically reports.[16]

Stubbornly, Morand stood for election again in 1959. This was his third try, for he had also failed back in 1936. The affair came to the attention of the new head of state, however. Reverting to the argument made by the petitioners in 1958, de Gaulle disapproved of Morand's candidacy "because of the partisan hatreds the writer would arouse within the Académie."[17] Morand was forced to withdraw. The author of *L'Homme pressé* (The Man in a Hurry) would have to wait nine more years for a place under the cupola, which he finally won in October 1968, after the General withdrew his veto. Morand was elected to the chair of attorney Maurice Garçon, one of those who had signed the petition against him in 1958. In 1975 another writer, Félicien Marceau, provoked a new controversy over his work for Belgian radio during the Occupation, in spite of which he was elected to the chair of Marcel Achard. This time it was Pierre Emmanuel, an authentic member of the "intellectual elite" alluded to by Jules Romains, who stalked out of the Académie, never to be seen again.

May, June, July

General de Gaulle's return to power in 1958 reminded many people of his radio appeal to the French on 18 June 1940. Among Gaullists, the memory of that day was directly relevant to the situation of France eighteen years earlier, for behind the Algerian question loomed the specter of the 1940 defeat and the collapse of the state. At times these reminiscences took on an almost surreal quality. Corsica, for example, had been the second department of France to be liberated in 1943, just after Algeria, and the Corsica landing of 24 May 1958 (Operation Resurrection) was preceded by broadcast messages reminiscent of the clandestine radio of the wartime years.

The General's return also stirred memories among his adversaries, who recalled the controversial vote of 10 July 1940 granting Pétain

full powers to govern France. The political legitimacy of de Gaulle's call for resistance rested on the questionable legality of this vote. The left was quick to draw the analogy. On 1 June 1958, the day of the brief ceremony marking de Gaulle's investiture by the National Assembly, Mendès France spoke in terms reminiscent of Danton: "The people believe we are free, but we no longer are. My dignity prevents me from giving in to this pressure from the factions and the streets."[18] He might well have uttered these same words in the casino of Vichy, breaking a certain lugubrious silence there, had he not been captured while attempting to leave France and thus found himself imprisoned in Rabat on that fateful day. René Rémond makes a similar point about the attitude of François Mitterrand: "Who can say that Mitterrand, in declaring himself an unalterable opponent [of the new Gaullist regime] on 1 June 1958, was not convinced that he was the authentic heir of the spirit of 18 June?"[19] Later, in *Le Coup d'état permanent,* Mitterrand would deplore the "illicit profit" that the General derived from his glory: "Before going on, shall I cede to custom and hail the man of 18 June 1940, the leader of wartime France, the liberator of the Fatherland, and bemoan the misunderstanding that today pits him against former comrades who remain republicans?"[20]

The extreme right, and especially the Pétainists, also found it expedient to exploit the parallel between 1940 and 1958, which gave rise to some disturbing comparisons. On 3 June 1958, the date of a vote to amend article 90 of the constitution so as to allow the new government to introduce further amendments, one deputy, Tixier-Vignancour, a supporter of Pétain during the Occupation and leader of the extreme right, argued that the Assembly had no business delegating the power to revise the constitution to de Gaulle. Only a few days before, Tixier had voted in favor of de Gaulle's investiture, just as he had voted for and still defended the granting of full powers to Pétain. A formidable debater, Tixier justified his negative vote on article 90 by invoking the precedent of 1940:

> Monsieur le Président du Conseil, some years ago [during the Occupation] you convened in Algiers a commission of jurists among whom, if memory serves, was M. Edgar Faure, whom it pleases me to see today seated in this chamber . . . Now it so happens that this commission informed me and other deputies and senators of the

Third Republic—those who had voted on 10 July 1940 to approve a motion stating that the government would proceed to draft a constitution to be ratified by the nation and applied by such assemblies as it might create—that we had no right to delegate such constituent authority, and that therefore we 580 deputies and senators had committed a grave error for which we were to be punished by being declared, as it was termed, ineligible for elective office.

Amid thunderous protest Tixier concluded:

> You will forgive me for thinking that never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that I would be asked twice in my life to delegate the fraction of constitutive authority that I held and, what is more, that for this second occasion I would be asked to do so by the very same man who punished me for having done it the first time.

Perhaps the most savory aspect of the whole episode is that Edgar Faure by no means lost countenance at the derogatory allusion to his role, as this exchange between the two men shows:

> Faure: Monsieur Tixier-Vignancour, may I interrupt?
> Tixier: Certainly.
> Faure: I thank you for your courtesy . . . I must say that the question of delegation of constituent authority is indeed a delicate one. But, Monsieur Tixier-Vignancour, as it seems that both of us, searching our memories, have followed a similar path, at least up to a certain point, it so happens that I have with me this evening a journal published in Algiers at the time when—under your supervision, Monsieur le Président du Conseil—I had the privilege of heading the legislative services of the Committee of National Liberation.
> Tixier: I was aware that you had brought that journal with you.[21]

Vichy was indeed on everyone's mind. A debate on constitutional law ensued, in which Tixier, supported by Jacques Isorni, attempted to use contemporary Gaullist arguments to prove that the vote of 10 July 1940 had been perfectly legal:

> Tixier: The text that was approved [in 1940] explicitly did not provide for any application of the constitution, as its wording shows: "It will be ratified by the nation and applied by such assemblies as it may create."
> J. Minjoz: You are overlooking the essential point: the preceding assemblies had been abolished.
> Tixier: That is precisely what is going to happen to you, my dear colleague, precisely that![22]

What a strange debate, with its bewildering shifts from past to present and back again. Roles were reversed and political bearings were lost in a storm of withering wit. The debate certainly had its comical side, which might seem inappropriate given the momentousness of the issue being debated before the Chamber. The whole controversy served more than anything else to confuse the past and destroy the organic unity of the event. The past was plundered by both sides to provide historical justification for action in the present, but at the same time it was shown to be infinitely malleable, manipulable at will for rhetorical effect and slanderous purpose. Had the symbols being invoked become mere political instruments, or did they still have real emotional significance? It would scarcely matter if the Occupation were of concern only to the politicians, but in fact it was a trauma from which the whole society still suffered. False analogies and, later, the abusive use of certain words (such as "genocide") did not deceive anyone who had lived through the events, but they probably did induce a certain fatigue in people less keenly attuned to the issues.

The Gaullian Exorcism

De Gaulle's vision of the Occupation took shape in five stages. At the time of the Liberation the General laid the two main cornerstones: the obliteration of Vichy and the redefinition of the Resistance as an abstraction, an achievement not of the résistants but of "the nation as a whole." From 1946 to 1950 he chose, as a political tactic, to appeal to a segment of the electorate by plucking the Pétain "string," a choice that had the effect of stirring up pro-Pétain sentiment. With the Rémy affair, however, things got out of hand, and the General dropped the hot potato. By then, moreover, Pétain was dead and the symbol had lost much of its potential value; after the Marshal's death, de Gaulle resumed his anti-Vichyite tone. Between 1954 and 1958,

he returned to an earlier interpretation, one that he had first tried out in 1944 and now resurrected in the sixth chapter of his *Mémoires de guerre:* that the history of France from 1940 to 1944 had been made in London and Algiers. Prior to the final crystallization of the resistancialist myth in the 1960s, he would once again attempt—in the fifth and final stage—to exorcise the year 1940.

On 30 December 1958, as part of budgetary economies under the Pinay-Rueff plan, veterans' retirement benefits were eliminated, a measure that affected many former résistants and provoked a public outcry. A year later, shortly before Armistice Day, de Gaulle explained his action: "Veterans are entitled to be first in line for honors; they are not entitled to be first in line for claims on the state."[23] Significantly, he alluded only to the situation of World War I veterans and said nothing about veterans of World War II or the colonial wars. Retirement benefits were quietly reinstated. Clearly this was a symbolic gesture, "whose financial significance was not great and whose expediency was not obvious."[24] The General appears to have had little desire to share his heroic legacy with others, no matter how distinguished their war record.

On 11 April 1959 came another insult. De Gaulle issued an order changing the date of the celebration of victory in Europe from 8 May to the second Sunday of the month. The reason given was that the proliferation of nonworking holidays was injurious "not only to the national economy but to certain occupational groups."[25] On Sunday, 9 May 1959, the government honored not just the Allied victory but also Joan of Arc, whose feast day happened to fall on that date. The ceremony, spurned by most veterans' organizations, thus lost something of its special significance.

In the same year, 1959, other celebrations took on new importance: on 18 June the General paid a visit to Mont Valérien; on 29 August he commemorated the liberation of the capital along with members of the Conseil National de la Résistance and the Comité Parisien de Libération; and finally, on 11 November, de Gaulle paid his respects to the dead of both world wars, just as in 1945.[26]

Yet while the General sought to highlight his personal idea of the Resistance, he took care, even as he promoted what he considered the essential unity of the nation, to show sensitivity to all schools of thought, not least through small gestures. In April 1959, just before

the first senatorial elections of the Fifth Republic, de Gaulle visited Auvergne. It was an occasion for reviving old memories. On the eighteenth the president and his entourage stopped in Vichy. From the first it promised to be an interesting visit. The General exchanged a few words with Mayor Coulon:

> —Since Albert Lebrun's visit in 1933, no president of the Republic has come to our city. [This was incorrect: the mayor "forgot" the fact that President Lebrun had come to Vichy in July 1940.]
>
> —My presence here has a somewhat unusual aspect owing to past events of which you are aware as well as to events of today.

De Gaulle then spoke to the citizens of Vichy, "queen of spas," whose municipal council had asked, in September 1944, that any allusion to the Vichy regime be stricken from the language:

> I am going to make a confession that I must ask you not to repeat, but I have to tell you that it's a rather emotional occasion for me to be making an official visit to Vichy. You will understand the reasons why. But history is a continuous thread. We are one people, and whatever ups and downs we may have suffered, whatever events we may have seen, we are the great nation of France, the one and only French people. I say this in Vichy. I am bound to say this in Vichy. The past is finished. Long live Vichy! Long live France! Long live the Republic![27]

This was an astonishing speech, every bit as astonishing as the General's famous "Vive le Québec libre!" (a phrase he uttered during a speech in Montreal, provoking a furor in Canada). De Gaulle's "confession" with its lofty view of history enabled him to allude to the unspeakable past and its not yet forgotten horrors. He even played the sorcerer's apprentice by broaching the subject of national unity in the former capital of Pétain's France, knowing full well the negative significance still implicit in the word "Vichy," which he repeated emphatically, as if uttering a magic incantation. One of the ministers traveling with him spoke of "exorcism."[28]

On the same day de Gaulle also paid homage to the people of Moulins: "I know all that was done here, and it was all the more meritorious because you here were on the periphery of the action . . . on that

gash in our territory known as the line of demarcation."[29] A short while later, on 6 June 1959, on his way from Clermont-Ferrand, the General stopped at Mont-Mouchet at the site of a monument to the French maquis. Between 16 and 20 June 1944 some three to four thousand guerrillas under the command of Colonel Gaspar had clashed in open battle with German forces and, before breaking off the engagement, left several of their number dead on the battlefield. For this visit de Gaulle was in uniform. With veterans of the United Resistance Movements lined up before him, the General walked forward alone toward their ranks and shouted, "Gaspar!" Gaspar stepped forward and bowed to the General, who again uttered Gaspar's name in an "emotional" voice before treating the leader of the maquis to "an affectionate thump in the pit of the stomach."

> While in Auvergne I was keen to pay my respects to those of our men who died at Mont-Mouchet. What happened here was a moving episode of the French Resistance which deserves to be more widely known. The attack was made when it had to be made, and those who fought here did not fight in vain. I am glad to participate in this ceremony with you, our maquisards, and their leader, Gaspar.[30]

This tribute was remarkable, if belated. On 1 July 1945 General de Gaulle, in the company of the Sultan of Morocco, made an official visit to Auvergne during which he refused to visit Mont-Mouchet. In Clermont he shook hands with several officials, including Gaspar, of whom he took no special notice.[31] At the time de Gaulle wished to minimize the influence and popularity of maquis leaders. Nor did he wish to stir up still fresh memories of the errors and weaknesses of the FFI's leadership at the time of the Allied landing. Local resistance fighters resented this omission. By 1959 the context had changed: it was not so much the maquis leader as the résistant that de Gaulle was honoring.

Within a few weeks the General had visited several memorial sites along a symbolic itinerary. He had exorcised the civil war, reminded people of the geographic (but no other) divisions enforced by the occupying powers, and, in his own way, celebrated the Resistance while refusing to grant it privileged status. New divisions stemming from the war in Algeria were too deep, however, to permit a definitive crystallization of the past.

Old Divisions Resurface

The historian must take care lest he too succumb to the charms of anachronism. When viewed in hindsight and with strict objectivity, the Algerian War has only a tenuous relation to the Occupation. But contemporaries did not see it that way. In their imaginations and slogans and at times in their actions, the most prominent figures in this new *guerre franco-française* identified with the men and events of 1940. Many of them, and especially the leaders, had been active during the Occupation. Hence the real anachronism is not to confuse the two sets of issues but to ignore memories of World War II as a factor in the Algerian conflict.

During the Algerian War historical analogy took on a new dimension. It became more than mere reminiscence and more than just a tactical device for blackening the reputation of one's enemies. Analogy became a way of laying claim to a political heritage. But the history in question was a tangled skein. The new divisions did not coincide exactly with those of 1940. The new fault line did not pass precisely between the camp of the résistants and that of the collaborators. Reclassifications in this area defined reclassifications in other areas as well, all of which depended to one degree or another on memories of the past. One consequence was that people were reminded of the fact that the choice between resistance and collaboration was insufficient to capture the true complexities of the divisions that existed in France during the Occupation.

Recently Pierre Vidal-Naquet has drawn a broad distinction among three ideal types of opposition to the Algerian War: the "bolsheviks," including neo-Leninist revolutionaries and dissident communists; the "third-worldists," including some of religious and some of secular bent; and the "Dreyfusards," whose allegiance was not so much to an idea of Algeria as to an idea of France.[32] Obviously it was among this third group that the resistance analogy took on symbolic value, particularly insofar as the Resistance was, in part, a continuation of a long-standing struggle against anti-Dreyfusard nationalism.

Initially this segment of the left denounced the resurgence of what it called fascism. This was evident in 1957, in the struggle against Algerian torture, and again in 1958 when, as we saw earlier, de Gaulle's assumption of power in May was likened to Pétain's acceptance of power on 10 July 1940. "The fascist plague and its imitations

always draw strength from exacerbations and perversions of national feeling. The liberal state is collapsing at the very moment when it ought to be taking charge of the destiny of a menaced and humiliated nation," wrote Michel Winock.[33] The fascist label was applied not only to the ultranationalists but also to France's new "savior." Fascism was bandied about as a generic concept more than as a term having specific reference to the history of the 1930s and 1940s: anything that posed a threat to the republic and to democracy was fascist.

Two years later, however, the principal danger seemed to come from the OAS (Secret Armed Organization), whose struggle to keep Algeria French was only "a pretext, a way . . . of achieving what has always been their supreme objective: the conquest of power, the installation of a fascist regime."[34] As a result, General de Gaulle, the OAS's prime target, became for some people a bulwark against that particular fascist threat. Michel Winock remembers having been scandalized at the time when certain opponents of the war switched their support to the General: Roger Stéphane and Maurice Clavel, for example, tried to see de Gaulle as a providential leader, as the man not of 13 May but of 18 June. "Once again the General cast his shadow over editorial offices."[35]

Nevertheless, there were limits on the left to the use of the 1940 analogy. Once one started looking to the past, it was natural to go back beyond 1940 to the Dreyfus Affair. Furthermore, the 1940 analogy was inadequate to account for certain dimensions of the Algerian War: one man who has studied these issues, Bernard Droz, emphasizes that "the true civil war was that which devastated the Algerian people."[36] The obvious truth of this statement highlights the sometimes farfetched character of historical analogies based on France's internal conflicts. Finally, and what was no doubt the most crucial factor, the resistance heritage was not the sole possession of those who opposed the war in Algeria. Among those who favored keeping Algeria French, memories of the dark years were at once more imperious and more contradictory.

After World War II the extreme right in France evolved in a complex fashion. The Poujadists, after scoring an electoral success in 1956, saw their influence decline with the fall of the Fourth Republic. Although the left saw the Poujadists as heirs of Pétainism and fascism,

those antecedents appear to have had little impact on the movement, whose ideological roots were shallow. There was an attempt to build a consensus around the notion of *nationalisme renouvelé*, modernized nationalism, an idea promoted by Pierre Boutang and his newspaper *La Nation française*, aimed at "men who wish to keep faith with the old Marshal whom they served and others who fought in the ranks of the Resistance and in the uniforms of Free France and who refuse to renounce anything in their past."[37] Only the Pétainists (Tixier-Vignancour, Jacques Isorni, and others) and the neofascists, such as Maurice Bardèche, remained loyal to the political traditions of the Occupation: the National Revolution for the former, the "new European order" for the latter.

De Gaulle's return in 1958 gave rise to considerable dissension. Among the hard-core Pétainists, Jacques Isorni refused to support the General in any way after the investiture vote of 1 June 1958: "The memories to which I am faithful, some of them stained with blood that has yet to be effaced by word or deed, prevent me from doing otherwise." Tixier-Vignancour, as we saw earlier, voted for investiture but against delegation of the power to draft a constitution. Finally, other Pétain supporters rallied behind de Gaulle: among those voting *oui* was the Marshal's wife.

The hesitant attitude of *Rivarol* is illuminating in this connection. A nostalgic Vichyite organ, *Rivarol* at first maintained its usual hostility toward the General: an editorial in the 15 May issue approved of "a government of public safety, yes, but not de Gaulle." In the following week, however, the paper published two photos side by side on its front page: one of Pétain, the other of de Gaulle. Each was captioned with a quotation: "To alleviate the suffering of France, I make a gift of my person" (Pétain, 16 June 1940); "I am a man who belongs to no one and to everyone" (de Gaulle, 19 May 1958). Having drawn this parallel, the editors with some reluctance found it possible to support de Gaulle, who, in spite of his "disastrous" actions in the past, was preferable to "keeping in power a pack of pretentious babblers" (editorial of 22 May 1958). Through July *Rivarol* stuck to this position, which can be summed up as follows: support de Gaulle out of loyalty to Pétain, and better de Gaulle than another Popular Front.

Unfortunately, the evolution of the Algerian conflict threw every-

thing into turmoil once again. Hostility to the General created new support for a neofascism that had more than one thing in common with its model. The Mouvement Populaire Français (whose very name was an explicit allusion to Jacques Doriot's Parti Populaire Français) called for a war on both "capitalist plutocracy" and the Marxist class struggle, conducted Nazi-style parades, and paid solemn homage "to the great Europeans who knew how to live and die for the great cause of the white peoples of the world: José Primo de Rivera, Marcel Déat, Drieu La Rochelle, Jacques Doriot, Robert Brasillach, Marcel Bucard, and others."[38] Jeune Nation, one of the most active movements, was founded by three brothers, François, Pierre, and Jacques Sidos, sons of an inspector-general in the Milice who was executed in March 1946. François Sidos enlisted in the Forces Françaises Combattantes in 1940 and fought the Nazis, while the other two, Pierre and Jacques, were incarcerated at the time of the Liberation for having collaborated with them.

The battle to keep Algeria French briefly encouraged illusions of unity among these nostalgics for Vichy:

> The liquidation of France's colonial empire brought forces to the national opposition that had been lacking since 1945. Relieved of the heavy burden of Vichy, it could once again appeal to the nationalism, indeed to the pure and simple patriotism of the French people, to oppose the abandonment of an important segment of the nation's territory. The army became receptive to its propaganda, and a million *pieds-noirs* [Algerian-born Frenchmen] constitute what is apparently the largest force of shock troops that the national opposition has commanded since the purge.[39]

This vengeful spirit was widespread among those who had been ostracized in 1945. On 6 December 1960 a branch of the Pétain association was established in Algiers. In the group's first official act, members swore to continue the struggle for "French land" with "arms in hand if necessary" and to see to it that "all sell-outs and traitors to the fatherland" would be brought to trial before the Haute Cour; they also swore to ensure that the remains of "the man who twice saved the Fatherland and who, in 1940, despite the defeat and the Occupation, was able to keep France's territory and national treasure intact" would be transported to Douaumont.[40] Note the familiar inversion of logic and the use of false analogies: the traitor de Gaulle is to be tried before the Haute Cour for selling out an empire saved in 1940 by Pétain and the Armistice, making it possible to mount a military resistance (the only legitimate resistance) in Africa. Advancing the same argument, General Weygand broke his silence in October 1959 to proclaim that Algeria was French, a declaration that would lead de Gaulle to write of "an occasion for giving vent to the rancors of Vichy."[41]

Yet allusions to the Occupation sustained attitudes other than hostility and revenge. Authentic former résistants, many of them well known, numbered among the most intransigent opponents of Algerian independence. Château-Jobert, a leader of the OAS and zealous defender of the "Christian West," was a veteran of the FFL and Compagnon de la Libération, as were Jacques Soustelle and Georges Bidault. Bidault's case is especially noteworthy, because in 1962 he did not hesitate to support the OAS by founding what he called the Conseil National de la Résistance, a name that evoked memories of the organization of which Bidault became the head in 1943 after the death of Jean Moulin.

Bidault attempted to justify his action in his memoirs. He argued, not inaccurately, that the empire had been the principal preoccupation of wartime Gaullism, pretending not to notice any difference between the geopolitical situation of 1940–1944 and that of 1958–1962. What is interesting about his argument, however, is not so much its polemical aspect as its fidelity to a certain *sensibility*, which sheds some light on the complex posterity of resistance participation:

> Among those who had truly been resistance fighters, who had faced real dangers, there were not a few who judged me guilty of bad taste for plucking the Resistance out of the museum for a purpose which, though identical to our primary aims, no longer enjoyed the good fortune of pleasing them. The fact must be faced: many résistants had gone into retirement . . . Many were convinced that the epic they had known firsthand could not and should not be repeated. In their minds the Resistance was such a beautiful thing that it must remain a unique memory, never to be seen again. Its place was in the Old Soldiers' Museum. What they liked about it was what would never recur.[42]

Coming from the leader of the MRP, the principal architect of the amnesty and pardon, this call for commitment on behalf of a memory of the past has a rather strange ring. In some ways it echoes the sentiments of those adversaries of an *Algérie française* whose commitment stemmed from memories of their youth in the Resistance and who, like Bidault, had resisted the temptation to rest on their laurels as old soldiers. Yet Bidault's loyalty to the past did not prevent him from drawing the logical implications of his hatred of de Gaulle. In 1965, even as he was drafting the above lines, Bidault in exile addressed a message to supporters of Pétain on one of the many occasions when it was thought the Marshal's ashes might be transferred to Douaumont and a few months before the 1965 presidential election:

> Without renouncing or changing anything that I did or said in those darkest of times, and speaking as one who has never owed Pétain anything, who never fought him half-heartedly, who was neither his protégé nor his godson, but who was his enemy, I say that today, at this very moment, it is the right of those who have known, as I have known, the hardships, horrors, and rigors of combat in the Resistance on French soil to say, and to say out loud, [that] Pétain had the Germans on his back and that he saved the Empire. And it was the man who, in opposition to Pétain, demanded that the Empire join the war and who proclaimed that Pétain was about to deliver it to the enemy, who, once the victory was won, and in spite of solemn commitments, made a gift of that same Empire to the scum who deported our families and ruined North Africa . . . The summit of Marshal Pétain's life was Douaumont. The summit of General de Gaulle's life was London and Algiers . . . Pétain died at Douaumont; de Gaulle died in Algiers.[43]

Let me make my position clear: the Algerian War, as I said earlier, was not governed solely by the logic of reminiscence. From it, however, we can derive a useful catalog of the various ways in which the past can be mobilized for political purposes:

—*As heritage.* Some of the arguments put forward on both sides of the conflict clearly sprang from roots in the past. Some ultranationalists emulated the men of Vichy in their desire to destroy the republic and even emulated collaborators in their desire to install a fascist re-

gime. These goals did damage to the cause of the extreme right. The army did not, in its entirety, favor the "counterrevolution" of the OAS—far from it. And most of the proponents of a French Algeria were not attracted by the idea of a French-style fascism. According to René Chiroux, many were embarrassed by the bad image that attached to their cause.[44] On the left, the struggle against the Algerian War brought forward new ideas and new leaders, often from outside the established parties, much as the struggle against the German Occupation had done.

—*As nostalgia.* Some of the men and women on both sides of the Algerian conflict forged their commitment out of memories of the Occupation, hence of their youth and earliest battles, which set the pattern for subsequent commitments. Nostalgia thus played a direct role, as in Bidault's appropriation of the CNR name, as in the memories of wartime Gaullism that motivated some on the left, and even, to take an extreme example, as in the emulation of Nazism by certain small groups. Neither the right nor the left could do without nostalgia.

—*As fantasy* (or the Maurras complex). In January 1945 Charles Maurras, upon receiving a life sentence and true to his certainties and dogmas, exclaimed: "This is Dreyfus' revenge!" Four decades after the Dreyfus Affair, these angry words were intended as an unambiguous declaration of Maurras' belief that the enemy condemning him in 1945, ironically to the same sentence as Dreyfus, was structurally the same enemy he had always been fighting, the republican government that he contemptuously called *la Gueuse* (the trollop). This belief only enhanced his legitimacy in his own eyes and reinforced his identity. As Mona Ozouf wrote of the Action Française's homage, on the occasion of the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the French Revolution in 1939, to Charlotte Corday [who murdered Marat during the Revolution] and to the Vendean rebels [who rose against the First Republic in 1793]: "If those on the other side are always the same, how could those who oppose them be anything but what they had always been, yet even more so?"[45] In order to exist through time, to keep the faith despite duration, an enemy must be invented, an enemy that is also impervious to the effects of time. (Similar kinds of behavior could be seen in the 1960s.) The enemy must take on the traits of the devil; the crisis is too grave, the stakes too high, to permit

anything less. The enemy becomes an abstraction, the absolute adversary with whom no compromise is possible. For those who felt themselves victims of the postwar purge, the enemy, after some vacillation, became de Gaulle, the one and only de Gaulle, the everlasting de Gaulle. For Bidault the enemy was the "spirit of surrender," the same spirit that had led France to give up the fight in 1940 and to abandon the empire in 1962. On the left the enemy was the specter of an anti-Dreyfusard reaction and of course of fascism, which, real or mythical, was frequently brandished in order to attract recruits and unify the ranks.

The war in Algeria, observed from the metropolis, was indeed a reprise of the *guerre franco-française*, but only insofar as old cleavages reproduced themselves in people's minds. What they saw, then, was not an image of the past but a transformation of that image to suit contemporary conditions.

An Invented Honor

The French love anniversaries, especially twentieth, twenty-fifth, thirtieth, and fortieth anniversaries. Such dates always take on a particular luminosity: round numbers are reassuring because they stir memories. The year 1964 was no exception. It was both a turning point and a culmination. France's new wounds from the Algerian War and old Occupation wounds that Algeria reopened had begun to heal (although they too would leave scars in memory). Nostalgia for the past gave way to optimistic dreams of a future planned by cheerful technocrats.

The time had come for Gaullism to leave its troubled past behind and to establish its legitimacy on a sublimated version of history. Exorcism was no longer the order of the day; now the challenge was to bestow on France an "invented honor."[46]

The problem was not just to bury memories of the *guerre franco-française* once and for all but to orient all future memory, to forge an official version of the past appropriate to the country's newfound "grandeur." It was in 1964 that this new version of the Occupation—a version most comforting to French sensibilities—achieved its definitive form: France was now cast as a nation that "forever and always resists the invader," whatever uniform he might wear, be it the gray-

green of the German army or the paraphernalia of the Roman legions. In 1959 René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo, two little-known cartoonists working for the new newspaper *Pilote*, reinvented the immortal Gaul in the character of Astérix. In 1963 Astérix was made to conquer the Goths and give a pasting to several Gallo-Roman "collaborators." But it was not until the end of 1980, after Goscinny had died, that Uderzo openly alluded to the "great divide" that cut the village in two.

Since 1964 a prize has been awarded each year in every school in France for the best essay on "the Resistance and deportation." Along with grammar and the history of the republic, the heroic deeds of the previous generation were to help shape today's pupil and tomorrow's citizen. The Resistance became a common theme of films, novels, and historical treatises, while Vichy and collaboration fell under a taboo that was rarely violated. Such a diversion of memory called for a consecration with full Gaullian pomp, and in due course a suitable occasion was found: the transfer of Jean Moulin's ashes to the Pantheon.

The idea was first broached in the spring of 1963. It was proposed not by the government but by the Union des Résistants, Déportés, Internés, et des Familles des Morts of the Hérault, a group formed in March 1960. (Jean Moulin was born in Béziers, departmental seat of the Hérault, in 1899.) At the same time, Raoul Bayou, socialist deputy for the Hérault and secretary of the National Assembly, made a similar suggestion: "No one," he maintained, "will question the especially heroic nature of the work of Jean Moulin, the true founder and first leader of the Resistance on French soil."[47] Moulin was indeed a plausible figure around whom to build a consensus. To the left, moreover, he offered one great advantage: his role demonstrated that General de Gaulle was neither the first nor the only résistant.

Despite the fact that the suggestion emanated from the opposition, it made headway within the government, which apparently had formulated no plans of its own prior to the Hérault proposal. On 30 May 1963 André Malraux, then minister of cultural affairs, discussed the matter with Prime Minister Georges Pompidou. The only problem that arose was whether to proceed by executive order or by parliamentary legislation, "the custom being to leave it to the legislature to bestow such honors on behalf of the nation." The minister of the

interior noted that, while it was "highly desirable to associate the parliament with so solemn a public manifestation of respect and gratitude," the new constitution permitted the executive to act without legislative approval.[48] The decision was ultimately made by the head of state, and on 11 December 1964, several days in advance of the ceremony, an executive order was issued by the Elysée.[49] It is interesting to observe that the matter was never debated in either the Assembly or the Senate; the only notice taken in the legislature was a written question submitted by one deputy, Bayou, to which a laconic response was issued by the minister of veterans' affairs.

The Gaullists thus not only coopted the opposition's proposal but also avoided parliamentary debate. A debate would have given opponents of the government a role in what was intended to be an official occasion. Furthermore, the vote would not have been unanimous, and thus symbolic unity would have been spoiled by factors of a partisan political order. Once the decision was made, moreover, the opposition raised no real objection to the staging of the ceremony. On this issue the consensus was genuine.

By contrast, the choice of date was apparently the result of chance and not a little haste. The Pantheon, undergoing renovation at the time, would not be available up through November 1964; that left only one month before the end of the designated year, the twentieth anniversary of the Liberation. The most suitable dates seemed to be the eighteenth and nineteenth of December, a few days before the Christmas holiday. The only connection with the career of Jean Moulin was that it was on the night of 1 January 1942 that he parachuted into France as the representative of General de Gaulle.

The ceremony was a two-day affair conducted according to precise protocol. The plans were approved at a meeting held on 8 December in the office of the president and attended by representatives of the *direction de l'Architecture,* responsible for overall organization, and of the ministries of the army and veterans' affairs.[50] Not a single detail, down to the uniforms to be worn by each unit in the parade, was left to chance. Timing was worked out to the second. To avoid any slipups, the directive issued by the military governor of Paris ended with a reminder to all recipients to synchronize their watches with the telephone time service, the number for which was printed at the bottom of the document.

The first day of the ceremony, Friday, 18 December 1964, was devoted to the exhumation of the remains and the transfer of the funerary urn. On Friday morning the urn was placed on display in the crematorium at Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris. General de Gaulle appeared at 12:15 to pay his respects before anyone else. The protocol specified that this was to be "a strictly private ceremony with no formalities of any kind."[51] The container, wrapped in a tricolor flag, was then placed in a casket bearing the simple inscription "Jean Moulin." At 2:45 the casket was transported to the Ile de la Cité and, to the accompaniment of a funeral march, placed in the crypt of the Monument to the Martyrs of the Deportation with military honors. The protocol for the ceremony indicates that the detachment from the 76th Infantry Battalion was to return to its vehicles only "after the departure of the official authorities," that is, the representatives of the government.

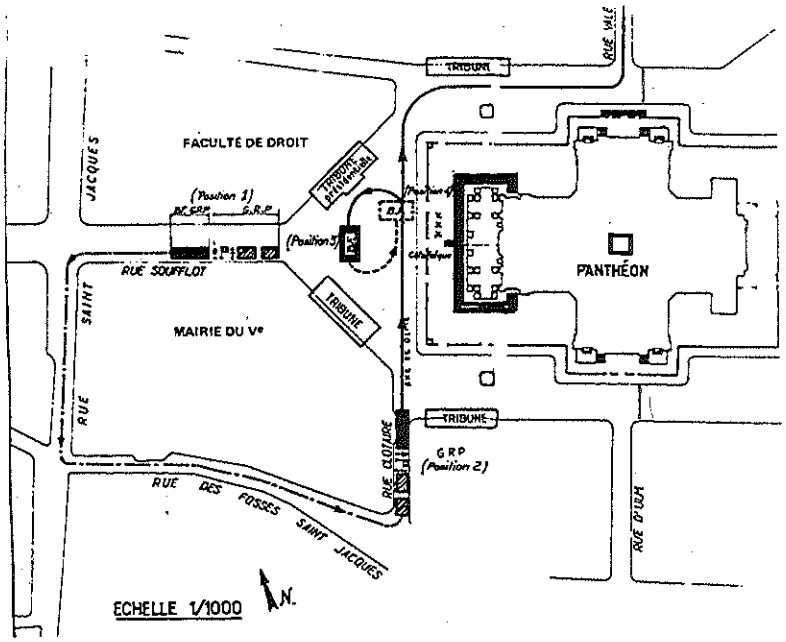
Following the homage of the head of state in the morning and the military honors in the early afternoon came the turn of the Resistance, the résistants, and the public. From 3:00 until 9:30 an honor guard stood watch. Members of the guard were replaced initially at half-hour, and later at ten-minute, intervals. The guard consisted of 194 Compagnons de la Libération along with political leaders of every stripe: Jacques Baumel of the UNR, Marcel Paul of the Communist Party, Colonel Rol-Tanguy, Eugène Claudius-Petit, Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, and many others. Members of the Conseil National de la Résistance were present, along with representatives of various interior resistance movements and of Free France. Throughout the ceremony the great bell of Notre-Dame pealed forth.

At 10:00 in the evening a cortege was formed, led by a regiment of the Garde Républicaine of Paris and followed by the flags of various resistance groups. Behind them, an armored reconnaissance vehicle carried the casket, flanked by torchbearers. Concluding the procession were former resistance fighters and their families. In the darkness of a Paris winter night and to the accompaniment of drums decked with crepe, the cortege made its way toward the Pantheon along the quai de l'Archevêché, the rue du Cloître-Notre-Dame, the courtyard of the cathedral, across the Pont Saint-Michel and up the boulevard of the same name to rue Soufflot and the Pantheon. There the dead hero was honored with another rifle salute, and a vigil of Compag-

nons de la Libération and resistance fighters was organized to stand watch over the remains. Throughout the night red, white, and blue antiaircraft searchlights played across the sky over the Pantheon.

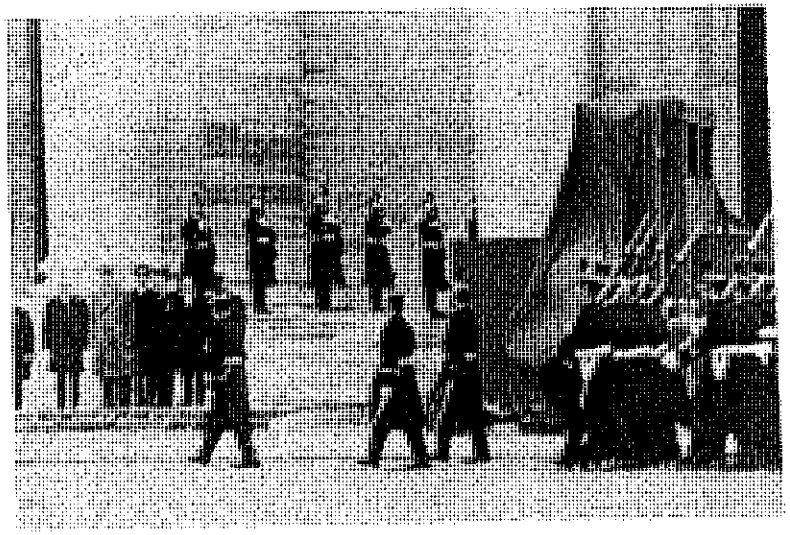
The ambiguities of the ceremony are apparent in this first day's events. The day was to have been an occasion for the Resistance as a whole and the people of Paris to pay their respects to Moulin. All movements and parties were represented, including—the point is important—the Communists and the rest of the left. In addition, the ceremony was designed to involve the city of Paris, and every aspect of the procession route had a precise significance. From Père-Lachaise to the crypt was simply a matter of covering ground: the dead hero was plucked from among the other remains buried at Père-Lachaise and reunited with the martyrs of the underground struggle. From the crypt to the Pantheon the procession passed through the heart of the capital, in a sense the heart of France "outragé, brisé, martyrisé, mais libéré" (in the words of de Gaulle). Here it was the people rather than officialdom that paid its respects. Yet two important aspects of the ceremony cannot be ignored. First, from the beginning of the day to the end, events were enveloped in military symbolism. Second, the first person to pay his respects to the martyr was General de Gaulle, ostensibly as a "private individual." Discreetly by comparison with what would take place on Saturday, Jean Moulin was thus linked to the man of June Eighteenth and the military aspects of the Resistance, and thus placed within a tradition more martial than political. In short, the government, in advance of the real ceremony, conceded the privilege of honoring the soon-to-be resident of the Pantheon to partisans of the Resistance and to the people of Paris.

But on the following day, Saturday, 19 December, it was General de Gaulle, this time in his guise as head of state, who presided over the ceremony. The celebration of the dead hero gave way to republican pomp. In front of the casket, still lying on a catafalque at the foot of the Pantheon, two reviewing stands had been erected: one, the presidential stand, stood in front of the Faculty of Law (to the left as one faces the Pantheon from the rue Soufflot); the other stood before the *mairie* of the Fifth Arrondissement, to the right. Together the two reviewing stands formed parts of an extended letter V, as in the V for Victory (see diagram).



Military parade at the Pantheon, 19 December 1964

There were six companies of marchers: one representing the Garde Républicaine of Paris, whose buglers led the march; three representing the Army; one representing the Air Force; and one representing the Navy. While André Malraux delivered his eulogy, the marchers waited on rue Soufflot at position 1. Then they moved to the parade's starting point, position 2. The parade got underway as the president of the republic and members of the government left the presidential reviewing stand to take up positions to the right of the catafalque holding the casket, which stood directly in the center of the Pantheon's facade. In this way the marchers were able to pay their respects "in a single moment" to both Moulin and de Gaulle. When de Gaulle accompanied the casket into the Pantheon, the parade halted. When he emerged it resumed, and the lead marchers headed down rue Valette. (The drawing is taken from the notes of the military governor of Paris, dated 11 December 1964 and preserved in the Archives des Palais Nationaux.)



Jean Moulin at the Pantheon, ceremony of 19 December 1964

The catafalque stands at the right of the picture, as the Garde Républicaine, followed by companies representing the various arms of the military, salutes General de Gaulle, flanked by Georges Pompidou (on his right) and André Malraux (on his left). (Photo AFP)

The minister of the army, Pierre Messmer, and the minister of veterans' affairs, Jean Sainteny, arrived shortly after noon and were welcomed by General Dodelier, military governor of Paris. De Gaulle arrived a few minutes later, accompanied by Georges Pompidou and André Malraux. Following a salute by the Garde Républicaine, the four ministers and the president went up and bowed to the casket before returning to the presidential reviewing stand. At 12:30 Malraux delivered the eulogy, which ended with "Le Chant des partisans" (The Partisans' Song). Next came a carefully organized military parade. Leading the way were elements of the Gardes Républicaines of Paris, followed by units of the three branches of the service, army, navy, and air force. Starting from the rue Clotaire, the troops moved

from right to left across the facade of the Pantheon, passing first in front of the catafalque and then in front of the chief of state and government ministers, who for this part of the ceremony stood to the right of the casket so that the troops, as they passed by, could "salute in one single motion both the mortal remains of Jean Moulin and the president of the Republic" (see photograph).[52]

Next the casket was moved to the center of the Pantheon and placed on a temporary altar (*reposoir*) under the cupola. The base of the altar was draped in veils of violet, the color of mourning, while in the choir beyond hung an immense tricolor flag, similarly draped in violet. Here, the General, the four ministers, and the Grand Chancelier de l'Ordre de la Libération came to pay their last respects to the hero and to salute his family. Neither the president nor the prime minister was present when the casket was carried down into the Pantheon's northern crypt in preparation for the final interment, which was to take place later. The official ceremony ended in the center of the Pantheon.

Broadcast live on one of the state-owned television channels, this second day of the ceremony was completely unlike the first. Everything revolved around the General, who all but upstaged his former subordinate. Resistance veterans, particularly those representing the interior resistance, that of movements and parties, were relegated to a secondary role. The office of the minister of veterans' affairs had even forgotten to issue an official invitation to the ANACR, a major resistance group, which, despite the ideological diversity of its membership, was considered to be fairly close to the Communist Party. Was this omission deliberate? In any case, the ANACR, in a press release dated 15 December, called on its members to participate in the "popular homage," that is, the Friday ceremony, but made no mention of the following day's events: "By paying solemn homage to the august figure who symbolizes their union in the combat for the Liberation, résistants of all movements, fraternally assembled, will bear witness to their common loyalty to the ideals of liberty, justice, and peace, which the Conseil National de la Résistance expressed in their name." In the end, however, the error was rectified, and Pierre Villon, a Communist deputy and president of the ANACR, took part in the ceremony along with other notable members of the group, including

Jacques Debû-Bridel and Léo Hamon.[53] Still the incident clearly reveals the difference between Friday's celebration and Saturday's: the latter was intended to focus attention on the connection between the dead hero and the General, a connection that was historically quite real, of course, but that was portrayed as virtually exclusive, as André Malraux's celebrated speech makes clear.

Malraux's relatively short speech, roughly fifteen minutes long, situated itself at the crossroads of history, memory, and epic. Beyond the striking imagery and vibrant evocation of a "people of the night," Malraux's speech was an ideological tour de force, a proof of the fundamental axiom of Gaullian resistancialism in a series of equations: the Resistance equals de Gaulle; de Gaulle equals France; hence the Resistance equals France.

De Gaulle and France

"The General," Malraux argued, "took upon himself the *non* of the first day, the continuation of combat whatever the means, and, last but not least, the *destiny* of France . . . France, and not some legion of French combatants." This was the man, the incarnation of the wounded nation, that Moulin met in London to relay the latest news and urge him to organize a secret army. In this way of looking at things, the Resistance was composed of many movements, each of which followed its own course, but only the leader of Free France was capable of effecting a "synthesis." The forces that engaged in clandestine struggle and in combat outside France constituted a potential for resistance that became operational thanks to de Gaulle alone:

> Each group of résistants could claim legitimacy for itself through the ally [England, the United States, or the Soviet Union] that armed and supported it or even on the basis of courage alone; only General de Gaulle could call upon the movements of the Resistance to form a *union* among themselves and with other forces, for it was through him alone that France waged one combat.

This organic unity of de Gaulle with France, to which each of the separate resistance movements subscribed, explains Moulin's role in

the Gaullian mythology. For it was Moulin—not the prefect who went to London but the emissary who returned—who made that unity possible. He was merely the disciplined instrument of a mission that transcended and predated him. (Indeed, he was perceived that way by many people at the time, and there were some who, for that very reason, harbored serious doubts about him.) The mission was to restore France's "liberty and grandeur," to borrow a phrase from the speeches of June 1940.

The Resistance

"After twenty years, the Resistance has become an exotic world, a place where myth coexists with organization . . . [Resistance was once a] deep, organic, apocalyptic sentiment, which since then has taken on the character of a myth." In Malraux's rhetoric, résistants and Resistance are two very different things. The fighters belong to the realm of contingency, concrete reality, history as it is lived. The Resistance subsists in the sphere of immanence, epic and edifying abstraction, history as it is dreamed. This is the realm of the Idea, not of flesh and blood. At this altitude men are merely pawns, important to be sure but secondary.

> Jean Moulin has no need of a usurped glory: it was not he who created Combat, Libération, Franc-Tireur, but Frenay, d'Astier, Jean-Pierre Lévy. It was not he who created the many movements in the Northern Zone, whose names history will record. It was not he who made the regiments; it was he who made the army.

Again we come back to this constant of Gaullist thinking: the Resistance was above all a military action, a continuation of combat after the 1940 defeat and in the tradition of Verdun. Accordingly, Moulin was honored with parade after parade in the two-day ceremony marking the transfer of his ashes.

This view offered two notable advantages: the civil war could be forgotten because the mission of the army is to fight foreign enemies, not handfuls of domestic traitors (about whom Malraux has virtually nothing to say); and the political and ideological diversity of the actual Resistance could be ignored.

The Nation: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

Malraux, in his passion, could not refrain from a direct allusion to the present:

> To attribute little importance to so-called political opinions when the nation was in mortal peril—the nation, not a nationalism then crushed by Hitler's tanks, but the invincible and mysterious fact that was to pervade this century; to believe that the nation would before long vanquish the totalitarian doctrines with which Europe then resounded; to see in the unity of the Resistance the most important means of fighting for the unity of the nation—to hold these views was perhaps to affirm what has since been called Gaullism. It was certainly to proclaim the survival of France.

And so, presto, Moulin became a Gaullist, vintage 1964. This would be his last heroic act. Therein lies the crux of the ceremony. The French, yesterday a people of the night, had survived a long and overcast dawn and now at last could see the light. The Pantheonization of Jean Moulin was to mark a point of no return: "May the commemorations of the two wars culminate today in the resurrection of the people of shades whom this man set in motion and symbolized, and whom he now invites to stand humble watch over his remains." Then "Arise ye dead!" and erase all memory of individual sacrifice to make room for the higher spirit that motivated each one and that ought now, twenty years later, to motivate all.

Malraux's evocative description of a personal encounter with this army of shades (during funeral ceremonies for Alsatian partisans in the Corrèze) and his biblical use of the familiar form of the second-person pronoun to address the dead hero and recount for him, in halting phrases, all that he did not live to see—Normandy, Leclerc at the Invalides and later in Strasbourg—made this an exceptional speech. And the speaker's talent, the talent of a man keen to reach out to the younger generation, helped to veil its ideological and partisan character. The fact remains that the transfer of Jean Moulin's ashes was a political act.

To begin with, the speech was made in a particular context. The ceremony took place three days after the vote on an amnesty for relatively minor offenses committed during the Algerian War and one

week after the vote on a law suspending the statute of limitations on crimes against humanity. The dynamics of national memory had created a very special set of circumstances. The time had come to forgive crimes committed in the latest *guerre franco-française*, a time for the nation to pardon those wayward children who had once again gone astray. Meanwhile the nation solemnly affirmed that the most spectacular of the Nazis' crimes would never be forgotten, but in a law aimed primarily at German war criminals, at foreigners. Rather than repress the past in its entirety, a selection was made to further national unity.

Second, people of all political persuasions were satisfied by this arrangement, and the satisfaction accounts for the absence of conflict prior to the transfer of Moulin's remains. It also explains why Jean Moulin was the right figure and the Pantheon the right place for carrying out such a maneuver.

Before 1964 Jean Moulin was not the legendary and symbolic figure he would soon become. Each party and movement had its own heroes: the Communists had Danièle Casanova, Jean-Pierre Timbaud, and Georges Politzer; the Socialists had Pierre Brossolette; the right had Honoré d'Estienne d'Orves; and the names of countless others, chosen to reflect local ideological allegiances and wartime memories, adorn streetcorners and squares in every town and village in France. Given this plethora of partisan and regional memories, with each group and locality jealous of its own martyr, the unifier of the Resistance was frequently lost in the crowd. In commemorations of World War II he did not always enjoy a place of honor.[54] A complex figure whose eminently political mission was just as complex as the man himself, Moulin played a role that is still hotly debated by veterans of the Resistance. He certainly did not enjoy the reputation of "universally acknowledged hero" that some would bestow on him in 1964. The Gaullists, in a transparent anachronism, chose him as a symbol. The man who, though obedient to the General, stood above the parties and movements in 1943 was to serve exactly the same cause twenty years later, at a time when France was fighting, again as always, for its national independence.

In the ceremonies marking the transfer, therefore, care was taken to distinguish between the commemoration of a unified resistance and the commemoration of the roots of Gaullism, which now traced its

origins back to World War II and sought to identify itself with France in its entirety. Nobody was deceived. The Gaullists knew perfectly well that the public could be persuaded to accept this identification only with the tacit agreement of others with a legitimate claim to the heritage of the Resistance. And those others, the Communist Party above all, were glad to have their heroic exploits recalled: for to do so, even if it was only to be coopted, reinforced their own legitimacy.

In this respect the Communist reaction to the ceremony was typical. The party used the occasion, once again, to denounce collaborators, meaning Pétainists who were clamoring, not without arousing sympathy among some Gaullists, for the Marshal's remains to be transferred to Douaumont. Furthermore, by taking an active part in the Friday ceremonies, the party recalled the meaning of the clandestine struggle:

> Jean Moulin in the Pantheon means that France is honoring the man who understood that, in the struggle against Nazi power, the liberation of our people depended on unity, just as it does today in the struggle against the power of money. Jean Moulin in the Pantheon means that France pays homage to the leader of the CNR, whose program included nationalization of banks and trusts. Jean Moulin in the Pantheon means that the fatherland is grateful to great men who keep their word.[55]

André Wurmser, the author of this editorial, noted that the ceremony placed the accent on Moulin's activities after his meeting with de Gaulle (the second meeting, in February 1943, from which he returned with the mission of setting up the Conseil National de la Résistance) and paid little attention to the efforts in France that "would lead to the trip to London where, with the consent of the Resistance from Jean Moulin to Fernand Grenier, General de Gaulle became president of the provisional government of the French Republic." In other words, "the focus is much more on Jean Moulin *mandaté* than on Jean Moulin *mandatant*," that is, on the Moulin who persuaded resistance elements to accept the head of Free France as their supreme authority rather than on the Moulin responsible for unifying a segment of the internal resistance movement. Yet Wurmser concludes with these words: "All of this matters very little, however. Honor to Jean Moulin! Honor to those who, following his example, died for

their country! Honor to the French Resistance!" Clearly Communist and Gaullist memories of the Resistance had been reconciled to permit sharing of power over the past.

Similarly, the choice of the Pantheon was no accident. The Pantheon was, from its inception, a monument for the celebration of the republic, "designed to dramatize the national consensus in an almost religious fashion."[56] The choice was therefore inevitable in the wake of the Algerian turmoil and one year (to the day) before what was to be the first election by universal suffrage of a president of France, an event that many considered to spell the end of the republican ideal. And yet, if Mona Ozouf is correct, the Pantheon has also been "a focal point of divisions within France; it still bears the original scars of the French Revolution, which have never been effaced."[57] Pantheonizations have always been occasions for memorable controversies, such as the one that erupted over the interment of Jean Jaurès on 23 November 1924 or the debates, mentioned earlier, that followed the Liberation. In the event, however, the organization of the ceremony in two phases, as well as the choice of Moulin as the hero to be honored, helped to circumvent conflict; consensus was achieved around a least common denominator.

Another question remains. The Pantheon was a place of oblivion as well as remembrance. It has never rivaled the Invalides as a monument to martial glories, nor has it welcomed beneath its cupola France's "truly great men," those who assumed responsibility for the nation (such as de Gaulle himself). Was Jean Moulin forgotten? In many respects the answer is yes. His identity was bestowed upon de Gaulle: the remains honored were those of a man described as the General's spokesman, the leader, to be sure, of the people of the night but a *delegated* leader. The dead man was honored in such a way as to honor even more the living head of state. Adversaries of Gaullism pretended to see Moulin only as the "unifier" of the internal resistance forces. After he was Pantheonized, not to say fossilized, partisan groups began once more to hone their weapons, though in time of crisis or in the wake of a dramatic election they might have occasion to allude to his memory. Under the cupola the symbol became unusable; or at any rate it was little used.

There were other signs after 1964 that Moulin had lost some of his aura. In May 1969 a memorial was erected at the spot in Salon-de-

Provence where he had parachuted into France in January 1942. Funds for this monument were raised by local groups, and the ceremony was quite small. True, the ANACR does regularly stage important ceremonies at the site. One such ceremony was held on 22 October 1972, just after the outbreak of the Touvier affair, and it ended significantly with an oath to "continue to fight for France by defending the Resistance and résistants."[58] Still the Salon monument has not become an important memorial site, as was noted by Maurice Agulhon who, on a visit to Salon, found the place run down: all there was for tourists to see was a "sewer," and on the day of Agulhon's visit the tourists happened to be Germans.[59] On the day the monument was inaugurated, de Gaulle left public life, and the memorial failed to attract all the attention it deserved. But it would appear that the ecumenical character of the figure of Moulin has faded somewhat since his Pantheonization; or at any rate it had faded until the heroic myth was revived by the new president, François Mitterrand, in 1981. Since 1964 Moulin's name has figured not so much in ecumenical celebrations as in heated polemics having to do with his role in the difficult unification of the Resistance or with the circumstances of his arrest (such as those surrounding the Barbie trial and the publication of Daniel Cordier's biography).

Twenty years is time enough for one generation to pass and another to arrive on the scene. The wartime generation, which held most of the reins of power, rewrote history for the consumption of a new generation that had not known the worst of its parents' suffering. But twenty years was also the time required for the statute of limitations to take effect for crimes committed in 1944. And oblivion has its limits.

In June 1964 a bill was filed in the National Assembly suspending the statute of limitations for crimes against humanity as defined by the Nuremberg Trials and the United Nations Charter: "Murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, or any other inhuman act committed against an entire civilian population before or during the war, or persecution for political, racial, or religious reasons." The bill was a response to an announcement by the West German government that the statute of limitations would take effect for all war crimes, including crimes against humanity, as of 8 May 1965 (this action was later postponed). The bill was passed unanimously by both houses on

first reading (26 December 1964).[60] In contrast to the amnesty-law debates of the 1950s, the discussion went without a hitch. Both Raymond Schmittlein of the UNR and Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier of the Communist Party were applauded by deputies on all benches in the chamber. Partisan insults were held in check. Harmony this time was indeed a reality. Of course the only war criminals discussed were Nazis. Although the 1945 United Nations Charter explicitly mentioned accomplices, the possibility of applying the law to French war criminals and collaborators was never raised.[61] Ten years later, however, when the law was invoked for the first time, it was to indict French citizens.

Despite some repression of wartime memories in the 1960s, memories of the Resistance were thus widely discussed, but largely within the framework established by the Gaullist version of the past. Yet that epic vision did not establish its priority until rather late in the day and was never able to silence all doubt or eradicate all bitterness. Not even the General himself was entirely exempt from vengeful impulses: when Weygand died on 28 January 1965, de Gaulle refused to allow the funeral to be held, as was the custom for general officers, in the Eglise Saint-Louis des Invalides—"a petty action that can only do a disservice to the regime."[62]

As early as the mid-1950s many French people clearly wished to lay controversy about the past to rest, and the invented honor of the Gaullists seemed perfectly tailored to fill the bill. Hence de Gaulle was able to build a consensus around his version of resistancialism, a concept broad enough to make room for other partisan views. A generation undeniably embraced the Gaullist image and ignored what few discordant voices remained.

> So long as the Resistance might pose as a pretender, it had to be struck down, if need be with the help of the parties. When the parties began grasping for power, the dead Queen once again became ripe for the taking . . . Many people were and are convinced that the new republic was founded by de Gaulle, that is, by the Resistance, the troubled interlude of the Fourth Republic having virtually disappeared from memory. [This founding myth] is shocking to historical consciousness and vexing for those involved as actors, who become suspect if they hint that the Resistance and de Gaulle were not identical; [yet] it is politically effective.[63]

3:2 Pieter Lagrou,

Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare

In recent years the field of modern history has been enriched by the exploration of two parallel histories. These are the social and cultural history of armed conflict, and the impact of military events on social and cultural history.

Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare presents the fruits of this growing area of research, reflecting both the colonisation of military history by cultural historians and the reciprocal interest of military historians in social and cultural history, to the benefit of both. The series offers the latest scholarship in European and non-European events from the 1850s to the present day.

For a list of titles in the series, please see end of book.

The Legacy of Nazi Occupation

Patriotic Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945–1965

Pieter Lagrou

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

2 Heroes of a nation: Belgium and France

Nowhere was patriotic legitimacy more crucial to post-war politics than in France: it was General Charles De Gaulle's only legitimacy when he returned from exile and declared the constitutionally legitimate heir of the Third Republic, the Vichy regime, null and void.[1] The amalgamation of colonists and exiles that had made up his Free French Forces was not a firm basis on which to build a new regime. De Gaulle was thus forced to promote a generous and collective vision of the French struggle for liberation, to pass over in silence the role of Vichy and of the Allies, and to nationalise the contribution of the resistance movements on the French territory. As provisional head of state between the liberation and January 1946, from the (extra-parliamentary) opposition until 1958 and as president of his self-styled Fifth Republic until 1969, De Gaulle applied a commemorative policy which assimilated the Nation and the Resistance in a symbolism that was simultaneously heroic, emblematic, abstract and elitist. The national honour had been safeguarded throughout the ordeal of the war by the heroes who presided over its destiny, in exile or on French soil, as combatants or as martyrs. Gaullist speeches and rituals staged tributes to the army and the nation through exemplary figures of patriotism and amalgamated the ambiguous victory of the Second World War with the patriotic triumph of the first. Abstract commemoration and its consensual appeal suited the general better than the cult of veteranism as a social movement. De Gaulle opposed the re-establishment of a Ministry for Veterans after the liberation, since he identified it with the political abuse by the Vichy regime (see chapter 10). He resented the organisations of PoWs and labour conscripts, both of which brought together hundreds of thousands of dubious heroes, and he certainly did not

[1] See Rousso, *Le Syndrome de Vichy*; Gérard Namer, *La Commémoration en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris, 1987); Pierre Nora, 'Gaullistes et communistes', in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, t. III, *Les Frances*, vol. I, *Conflits et partages* (Paris, 1992), pp. 360–71; and Paul Thibaud, 'La République et ses héros. Le Gaullisme pendant et après la guerre', Esprit 198 (1994), pp. 79–80.

favour the attribution of heroic status across the many groups of resistance veterans and victims of persecution.

De Gaulle's theatrical and patriotic leanings were combined in his talent for staging commemorations. On 16 November 1940, with characteristic bravura, he had created his Ordre des Compagnons de la Libération, to be bestowed by him personally on the exemplary heroes who would distinguish themselves in the – at that time still very remote and even unlikely – liberation of France.[2] The medal carried the symbol of the Free French, a sword with the Cross of Lorraine. The chivalric element of an 'Order' indicated that De Gaulle's inspiration lay closer to the Knights Templar than to more contemporary examples of veterans' mass movements. On his own initiative De Gaulle himself elected 1,036 symbolic heroes, a list he closed by a decree that appeared three days after he had resigned from government, on 23 January 1946. The list mirrored De Gaulle's vision of the respective contributions to the liberation of France: 783 combatants of the Free French Forces, 107 intelligence agents assuring the connections between the occupied country and the general's services, and only 157 heroes of the internal resistance on French soil (some nominees fell into more than one category). Of these, 238 had been decorated posthumously. Six of the 1,036 were women. The communist resistance, and left-wing forces in general, were barely represented. Raymond Aubrac, Pierre Villon, Charles Tillon, Pierre Hervé and Maurice Kriegel, amongst the most prominent heroes of the internal resistance, did not figure on the list. At some point in post-war history and particularly during De Gaulle's presidency under the Fifth Republic, thirty-eight *compagnons* would become cabinet ministers, amongst them George Bidault, Jacques Chaban-Delmas, Henri Frénay, André Malraux, Pierre Mesmer, Alexandre Parodi, Christian Pineau, René Pleven, Maurice Schuman and Pierre-Henri Teitgen.

The *compagnons* were the protagonists of the commemorations staged by General De Gaulle, particularly at Mont Valérien, the monument of his own creation inaugurated on 11 November 1945.[3] Not only did the date of the inauguration bear witness to De Gaulle's effort to assimilate the collective memory of World War II into that of a classic military conflict, the First World War, the whole ceremony emphasised it. Mont Valérien had been the site chosen by the Germans for the execution of

[2] See Roger Faligot and Rémi Kauffer, *Les Résistants. De la guerre de l'ombre aux allées du pouvoir, 1944–1989* (Paris, 1989), pp. 551–6.

[3] See Namer, *La Commémoration*, pp. 127–41, and Serge Barcellini and Annette Wieviorka, *Passant, souviens-toi! Les Lieux du souvenir de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale en France* (Paris, 1995), pp. 166–75.

probably more than 1,000 French prisoners (resisters and hostages) over the period of the occupation, but the monument, as conceived by De Gaulle, was primarily a memorial to the fallen soldiers of the French army. Fifteen corpses were selected for symbolic burial on Mont Valérien, eleven of them the bodies of men killed in battle. Three fell in the battle of 1940, five in the battle for liberation. Ten had been regular soldiers, chosen from the different military forces – infantry, navy, air force; colonial forces were well represented, with four soldiers of African descent. Only one was a resister killed in action. Four graves contained the bodies of heroes who had not fallen in battle but were resisters executed by the enemy after their arrest. One was a resister-PoW. As with the list of *compagnons*, De Gaulle preserved Mont Valérien for his own commemorative purposes by publishing a decree which kept the direction of the monument in safe hands when he withdrew from power in January 1946, even though the Communist Party or the government itself could not be prevented from visiting the site as part of their own commemorations. At the height of the French colonial war in Indochina, the government of the Fourth Republic added one grave of a French soldier killed in the war against Japan, for rather obvious propaganda reasons. A seventeenth grave awaits the burial of the last surviving *compagnon*. As soon as he returned to power in 1958, De Gaulle undertook the construction of a majestic monument on the same site, which was inaugurated on 18 June 1960.

The Ordre and Mont Valérien illustrate De Gaulle's emblematic and elitist concept of commemoration of the Second World War. The general never favoured the transformation of his former Free French Forces into a powerful veterans' league supporting his political ambitions. The *Bulletin de l'Association des Français Libres* is a repetition of desperate appeals designed to stir even a modicum of associational and commemorative activism amongst the veterans of the Free French. The association claimed 24,000 potential members, but succeeded in selling only 3,200 copies of its journal. In February 1948 it published a list of regional clubs, totalling over 20,000 'members', but only two months earlier it had admitted that no more than 6,000 of them paid membership fees. Most characteristic of the list was the geographical dispersion of the Free French, mostly recruited amongst French citizens who were not living on the continent at the time of the German occupation and who had, to a great degree, remained outside it after the war. In 1948 more former Free French were living in the French territories of Brazzaville or Tahiti, or even in Brazil, than in Lyons.[4] Sixty-eight

[4] The *Bulletin de l'Association des Français Libres* (Dec. 1947 and Jan. 1948) listed 14,353 'members' in France itself, 5,399 in the Union Française and 2,247 abroad.

French departments had fewer than one hundred former Free French in their territory, thirty-three fewer than thirty, and about a dozen not even a single potential member. Only the metropolitan area of Paris and the Breton department of Finistère, home of some of the most important French naval bases, exceeded 1,000 members. The Free French felt crushed and marginalised in a social landscape dominated by powerful associations of veterans and war victims. They bitterly complained that they were neglected by the government, comparing their treatment with that of the prisoners and deportees, for whom a special ministry had been created, endowed with huge financial resources and personnel.

The journal complained about local sections 'asleep in a terrible lethargy' or 'an indifference regarding our duties towards the community of Free French which reveals a most dangerous state of mind'. Faced with a crushing deficit, the association announced that it needed to triple its membership figures, phlegmatically adding:

> It is the type of speculation on which the Free French have lived since 1940. Of course, if our efforts in this direction fail, we will be forced to conclude that the Free French are no longer interested in themselves or in what they have been, and, in this case, we won't be able to bring a dead body back to life. Then we will shut down the house in its present form, transform it into a club of older gentlemen engaged in charitable works, and continue to provide a modest and shaky presence at official ceremonies.[5]

This soon turned out to be a fairly accurate prediction of the association's development.

The communist remembrance has often been presented as the mirror image of the Gaullist resistance myth.[6] The national insurrection and partisan war of the internal Resistance took the place of the external Resistance and its classic military feats – the *maquis* instead of Bir Hakeim. The war in the colonies and at the side of the western Allies was replaced by the glorious victory of the Red Army. Instead of De Gaulle's abstract and all-embracing references to the Nation, the French Communist Party (PCF) identified strongly with specific heroes and martyrs. It cultivated its martyrs – 'the party of the 75,000 executed militants' – and successfully organised a whole constellation of veterans' associations for partisans, deported workers and victims of Nazi persecution. The immediate post-war period corresponds with the party's most expansive time. Communist ranks had been decimated by persecution and the party was actively canvassing for new members and voters; the success of this operation was partly due to the appeal of the

[5] *Bulletin de l'Association des Français Libres* (Apr. 1948).

[6] See, in addition to the above, Marie-Claire Lavabre, *Le Fil Rouge. Sociologie de la mémoire communiste* (Paris, 1994), pp. 190–219.

resistance aura. Instead of an exclusive narrative, appropriating patriotic merit and stressing the distinction between the historically certified resisters and those who joined the myth *post facto*, the collective memory propagated by the PCF was as open and inclusive as possible. Reference to the Nation, central to the Gaullist discourse, was replaced by reference to the working class, the embodiment of resistance against a collaborating bourgeoisie and its reactionary ideology, and to anti-fascism. The paradigm of anti-fascism was the most inclusive: all political opponents of fascism, and even more all victims of fascism, could subscribe to it and become part of an anti-fascist family in which the party played a central role, contemporaneously and historically, and where martyrdom and heroism, victims and veterans mingled together, fraternally sharing the heritage of victory. I will deal with the issue of anti-fascism as a factor which revised and reconfigured traditional notions of French patriotism in chapter 12. The political debate on the treatment of the resistance was not characterised by innovation – on the contrary, it expressed the integration of the collective memory of the resistance into older patriotic memories.

De Gaulle's resistance to the reinstatement of a Ministry for Veterans created much criticism and resentment in veterans' circles, and particularly in the official representative structure of all First World War veterans, the Union Française des Anciens Combattants (UFAC). The UFAC faced a disruptive challenge after 1945.[7] If it was to rehabilitate the image of the veterans of 1914–18 and continue as a truly representative organisation, it needed to bring in the veterans of 1940–5 as well. The ranks of the UFAC needed a purge, and they needed the new blood of the new *génération du feu*. Almost immediately, the post-war UFAC offered five seats to representatives of the CNR, and it was generally accepted that the place of the resistance veterans was in the UFAC. At the same time, the *poilus* of the Great War hesitated to open their ranks to the new generation, for fear of devaluing their own criteria. As one of its members expressed it in December 1945: 'The UFAC doesn't want any "32nd of August" [1944] resisters.'[8] Belonging to the great patriotic family of the *anciens combattants* of the war in the trenches was a highly formalised matter, expressed by the fetish of the *carte du combattant* which a veteran could obtain only after three months – ninety days – of effective combat, as certified by regiment listings and combat records.

[7] See 'Ordonnance no. 45-1181 du 14 mai 1945 relative à la création de l'Union Française des Combattants', *Journal Officiel* (7 June 1945), pp. 3294–8, and the documentation in AN F60 240.

[8] M. Barral in Commission Pensions (13 Dec. 1945), AAsN. The *poilus* or veterans of the Great War were known thus, as 'the bearded ones', because of their rough and manly life in the trenches.

This carried the implication, for example, that soldiers taken prisoner after less than three months of effective combat did not qualify for the *carte du combattant*; yet none of the PoWs of 1940–5 had such a record, for less than six weeks had passed between the German invasion and the armistice. By the same token, if the criteria of 1918 were to be maintained, only the Free French troops or the troops who took part in the final offensive against Germany could qualify. For the resistance, the establishment of a record of ninety days of effective combat was a haphazard undertaking, since this time there were no general orders, regiment listings or combat records. Debate over the integration of new categories of 'combatants' into the great patriotic family of 1914–18 was to animate many of the commemorative gatherings of organisations established to unite 'veterans' of various characteristic experiences of the Second World War, such as concentration camps or forced economic migration.

The new government of Félix Gouin, who succeeded De Gaulle in January 1946, did incorporate a new Ministry for Veterans and War Victims. The precise title of the ministry, which was to incorporate the services of the former Ministry for Prisoners, Deportees and Refugees, had been debated, with propositions for lengthy names such as 'Ministry for Veterans, Prisoners, Deportees and War Victims'.[9] The final name of the ministry confirmed the dichotomy between veterans – that is *anciens combattants*, fighters, heroes – and victims, virtually forcing each group to aim for the honourable division of fighters, rather than falling into the alternative category of losers, the war victims. Laurent Casanova, the communist minister who assumed this new responsibility, represented all the groups gathered under his ministry. He was welcomed by the appropriate commission of the Assemblée Nationale in February 1946 as 'a valorous fighter, a prisoner who escaped, a resister and a man stricken in his dearest affections' – the latter referring to the death in Auschwitz of his wife and communist resistance heroine, Danielle Casanova.[10] Casanova, who would contribute much to the new patriotism of the French Communist Party, saw it as his central task to unify the movement of veterans and victims of both wars, combining a scrupulous respect for the achievements and procedures of the generation of 1914–18 with the inevitable recognition of the fundamental difference of the generation of 1939–45.

In the genuine generational conflict between the two *générations du feu* the resistance played only a secondary role compared to the clash – as described by François Mitterrand, one of Casanova's successors – of

[9] M. Marbrut in Commission Pensions (19 Dec. 1945), AAsN.

[10] Commission Pensions (13 Feb. 1946), AAsN.

two giants: the veterans of the trenches of 1914–18 (two million men) and the veterans of the stalag of 1940–5 (one million men). The *poilus* of the victorious army of the trenches were animated by a particular animosity against the military prisoners of the defeat of 1940, contemptuously known as the 'knights of the raised rifle-butts' (*les chevaliers de la crosse en l'air*), the sign of surrender.[11] In a *fait accompli* manoeuvre which roused indignation amongst the members of the UFAC, Mitterrand, one of the national leaders of the PoW movement before he became minister of veterans and war victims, would give the much coveted *carte du combattant* to all PoWs with the exception of animators of Pétain circles, but including even PoWs who became civilian workers.[12]

A first decree containing a definition of who could be considered 'a member of the resistance' was published shortly before the end of the war, on 3 March 1945.[13] It established five categories: all members of resistance organisations, recognised either by De Gaulle, the Allies or the CNR; individuals who had joined the Free French Forces in London or Algiers, or tried to do so; and individuals who even in complete isolation had committed 'recognised acts of resistance'. The fourth and fifth categories covered all resistance victims of arrest or execution by the Germans or Vichy for reasons other than common law offences. The text carried no reference to the post-1918 definitions of the *combattant*, no notion of effective combat, *carte du combattant* or minimum involvement of ninety days, nor any of the procedural provisions to authenticate applicants. The three proposals submitted to the Assemblée Nationale in the course of 1945, concerning procedures and criteria, no longer referred simply to a 'member of the resistance', but specified instead *ancien combattant de la Résistance*, *combattant volontaire de la Résistance*, or *combattant de la Résistance*, most explicitly referring to post-1918 notions of veteran soldiers.[14] The joint proposal discussed in the spring of 1946 was presented as a reparation for the discrimination between the regular military formations of the Free French Forces (Forces Françaises Libres, FFL) and the Forces Françaises Combattantes (FFC), who had been in direct contact with London – both of whom were assimilated

[11] See the excellent analysis by Christophe Lewin, *Le Retour des prisonniers de guerre français* (Paris, 1986), pp. 177–89.

[12] See ibid. and Commission Pensions (30 May, 9 July 1947, 30 Apr. 1948).

[13] See Serge Barcellini, 'Les Résistants dans l'oeil de l'administration ou l'histoire du statut de combattant volontaire de la Résistance', *Guerres Mondiales et Conflits Contemporains* 178 (1995), pp. 141–65; and Olivier Wieviorka, 'Les Avatars du statut de résistant en France (1945–1992)', *Vingtième Siècle* 50 (1996), pp. 55–66.

[14] *Rapport . . . par M. De Raulin*, in *Documents AsN*, annexe 608 (7 Mar. 1946), pp. 584–5.

with regular soldiers – and the resistance troops of the Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur (FFI), who lacked any such support.

The new law, unanimously adopted by the Assemblée Nationale, stipulated the requirement of ninety days of combat, the *carte du combattant*, and delegated application of the procedure to the Ministry for Veterans, implying a *de facto* assimilation with the post-1918 status and procedures for veterans. Yet these features differed in important respects from the status of Great War veterans. The *poilus* of 1914–18 could decide at any time to apply for the status of combatant, since there was no documentary difficulty in confirming their military record. Many would only do so several decades after the war, particularly when they came to retire. Even as late as 1986, for example, about 1,000 veterans of the Great War would apply for the 'green card' (for the card was indeed the same colour as that other coveted card across the Atlantic).[15] For veterans of the resistance, the documentary evidence was less clear cut – either a declaration of membership by a national leader of a movement, or two declarations by certified veterans of a resistance involvement of which they had been witnesses. As time passed, these declarations were deemed less sure: since the documents were not contemporary with the events, memories might be fallible or organisations might show a tendency to magnify membership figures; or it could be a matter of ingratiating oneself with latter-day applicants. The law therefore specified a period of nine months in which to submit applications, with the due documentation, before the procedure would be irrevocably closed. This law was almost immediately contested and a new version adopted in 1949, largely inspired by a general anti-communist atmosphere, contained fresh dispositions designed to prevent what its enemies perceived as a communist intention to obtain massive and inauthentic certification for its militants. Resistance organisations had to be endorsed by the ministry rather than recognised by the CNR (which would have implied the recognition of the PCF as a resistance organisation), and the active involvement of ninety days had to precede the D-Day Normandy landings. Due to these manoeuvres, the law came into effect only in March 1950, with a foreclosure of one year.

The immediate effect of the law was a revival of organisations for former resisters. As Olivier Wieviorka convincingly describes for Défense de la France, resistance movements barely survived the end of the war and the attempts to set up veteran-type associations based on wartime movements were mostly unsuccessful.[16] Attempts to create

[15] Faligot and Kauffer, *Les Résistants*, p. 584.

[16] Olivier Wieviorka, *Une certaine idée de la Résistance. Défense de la France, 1940–1949* (Paris, 1995), pp. 353–410.

national organisations uniting resistance veterans of all types of movement in the face of the legal recognition of the category of 'resisters' were abortive. The procedural battles and, most significantly, the campaign against foreclosure of the procedure gave birth to three national organisations of resistance veterans which explicitly emulated their forebears of 1914–18, all founded in the early 1950s.[17] The Association Nationale des Anciens Combattants Résistants (ANACR), founded in July 1952, was animated by communist resistance figures, recruited primarily amongst former FFI and Franc-Tireurs et Partisans (FTP). Thanks to the significant proportion of non-communists in its membership and leadership, it was highly successful, with over 30,000 members. The Association Nationale des Combattants Volontaires de la Résistance (ANCVR), founded in February 1953, succeeded an elitist Gaullist formation of officers and deputy officers of the resistance – whatever a rigorous definition of military grades might have meant in the conditions of underground action. Its membership did not exceed 1,500. The Confédération Nationale des Combattants Volontaires de la Résistance (CNCVR), founded in October 1953, was the more popular Gaullist formation with just under 10,000 members. Their combined efforts at militancy laid an effective whip on the governments of the Fourth Republic. The 'foreclosure' was postponed annually until De Gaulle's return to power. As the undisputed hero of the resistance, with a profound dislike of veterans' attitudes, the general-president autocratically closed the procedure for new applicants. The effects of the postponement of foreclosure could not be described as marginal: whereas 76,000 cards had been distributed in 1954, by the end of the decade France counted almost 200,000 authenticated resisters.[18] The steady production of new declarations by witnesses and resistance chiefs was perceived with irony, and certainly devalued the aura of the 'green card'. The decision in 1975 by Valérie Giscard d'Estaing to cancel the national holiday of 8 May, commemorating the end of the Second World War, provoked such a wave of protest and associational militancy that the president was forced into an expiatory sacrifice: the foreclosures were lifted, and the number of cards issued soared to reach 260,000. François Mitterrand, this time as president, favoured a generous distribution of *cartes de combattant de la résistance*, including some to his fellow PoWs.[19] The outcome of a debate dominated by an obsession for authenticated heroism achieved the opposite result. Resistance veterans

17 See Barcellini, 'Les Résistants'.
18 See the graph, ibid., p. 162.
19 See, in addition to the above, Eric Conan and Henry Rousso, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris, 1994), pp. 173–207.

and their organisations were to a certain extent devalued, and the French nation would address itself to other *milieux de mémoire* with a more secure status.

Of the three countries dealt with in these pages, Belgium showed the most outspoken conflict between the returning exiled government and local political forces claiming the inheritance of wartime resistance. In Allied documents, Belgium was even ranked with Greece and Italy as an alarming and unstable democracy.[20] Even though it was a rhetorical exaggeration to represent Belgium as being on the brink of civil war and revolution, it was instrumental both to Churchill in staving off domestic criticism and to the Belgian government as it begged for more Allied support. Government and resistance were indeed in opposition, partly due to the clumsy approach of the Pierlot government as it failed to assimilate the resistance and appropriate its merits, which were achieved very skilfully in France and the Netherlands. On his return to Belgium, Pierlot offered two government posts to communist ministers and one to the leader of the Independence Front, the largest Belgian resistance organisation founded by the Communist Party, but after a month they left the government in protest against its ill-considered methods of disarming the resistance. Allied observers were dissatisfied with the Catholic Pierlot and judged his government too conservative to be in touch with Belgian public opinion. His fall and the succession of the socialist pragmatic Van Acker in February 1945 at the head of a new government of national unity, again including the communists, were welcomed both in Belgium and abroad as something of a new start for Belgium. Apart from foreign affairs minister Paul-Henri Spaak, the new cabinet did not include any of the ministers of the cabinet-in-exile in London. Political figures who had spent the war years in occupied Belgium were deemed less alienated from the population than the exiles. Van Acker's unifying and pragmatist approach was demonstrated by the absolute priority he gave to Belgium's national coal production.

The eruption of the royal question in the summer of 1945 signified the end of national cohesion. The Catholic Party identified with the king and refused to remain in a government that prolonged his exile. The anti-royalist coalition presented itself on the rebound as 'the government of the resistance' and prided itself on the inclusion of seven 'resistance heroes' in a cabinet of eighteen ministers, including two members of the newly created resistance party, the Union Démocratique Belge (UDB). Yet despite this appropriation of the resistance aura, the resistance

20 Lagrou, 'US Politics of Stabilization'.